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HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER



VOL. I., FRONTISPIECE

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

BY

ARTHUR B. CHAMBERLAIN

ASSISTANT KEEPER OF THE CORPORATION ART GALLERY, BIRMINGHAM

WITH 252 ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING 24 IN COLOUR

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

NEW YORK

DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

1913

HANS HOLBEIN

Self-Portrait

Drawing in Indian ink and coloured chalks, washed with water-colour

BASEL GALLERY

HANS HOLBEIN

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
at the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

TO MY WIFE

PREFACE



N this book the writer has endeavoured to give as complete an account as possible of the life and career of the younger Holbein, together with a description of every known picture painted by him, and of the more important of his drawings and designs. The earlier books devoted to the subject—such as Wornum's *Life and Works*, 1867, and Dr. Woltmann's two volumes—although they must always remain of the utmost help to the student, are now in some respects out of date. The second edition of the latter's great work, in which he modified and corrected many passages in the earlier issue, has never been fully translated into English ; while the latest book of importance on the subject published in this country, *Hans Holbein the Younger*, by Mr. Gerald S. Davies, M.A., 1903, is mainly devoted to the art of the painter, and does not profess to give complete biographical details of his life. In recent years many new facts as to Holbein's career have been discovered, and fresh pictures by him unearthed, while modern criticism has reversed some of the earlier conclusions respecting the authorship of a certain number of works at one time attributed to him. Much valuable information upon the subject has been published at home and abroad, largely in periodicals devoted to such matters and in the transactions of artistic and learned societies, by various well-known students of the master in Germany and Switzerland, chief among whom must be mentioned Dr. Paul Ganz, the director of the Public Picture Collection in Basel, now recognised as the leading authority on Holbein, together with Dr. Hans Koegler, Dr. Emil Major, H. A. Schmid, and other writers too numerous to mention here ; while in England equally valuable contributions to our knowledge have been made from time to time by such critics as

Mr. Lionel Cust, M.V.O., Sir Sidney Colvin, Mr. Campbell Dodgson, Sir Claude Phillips, Miss Mary F. S. Hervey, and a number of others, in the pages of the *Burlington Magazine* and elsewhere. Much valuable information is also to be found in two recently published volumes—Dr. Curt Glaser's *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, 1908, and Dr. Willy Hes' *Ambrosius Holbein*, 1911.

The writer has availed himself as fully as possible of the newer facts and conclusions embodied in such papers and communications, the source of information in all cases being fully acknowledged. A very careful study of the Calendars of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, extending over a number of years, has enabled him to add some fresh items of information about the painter and certain of his sitters, and of several of the artists who were his contemporaries in England. He has dealt at some length, though necessarily in a condensed form, with the chief painters and craftsmen, both English and foreign, who were at work in London under Henry VIII, much of the information thus brought together having been hitherto scattered about in a variety of publications not always conveniently accessible to the student. He thus hopes that the book will to some extent serve the purpose for which it is primarily intended—the provision, in as concise a form as possible, of a complete biography of the painter, embodying all the more recent discoveries ; and he trusts that it may be of some small service to those who are interested in Holbein, but have neither the time nor the opportunity to avail themselves of the many scattered sources of information which he has attempted to bring together within the covers of a single book.

By the gracious permission of His Majesty the King, the writer has been allowed to include among the illustrations, reproductions, in some instances in colour, of a number of pictures and drawings by Holbein in the royal collections; and he has to thank the Lord Chamberlain and Mr. Lionel Cust, M.V.O., Surveyor of the King's Pictures, for the kind assistance they rendered him in obtaining such permission. He has also to express his grateful acknowledgments to

a number of owners and collectors for similar permission to reproduce works by the master in their possession, among them Her Majesty the Queen of Holland, who has graciously allowed the inclusion of the beautiful miniature of an Unknown Youth; the Duke of Devonshire, G.C.V.O.; Earl Spencer, G.C.V.O.; the Earl of Radnor; Lord Leconfield; the Earl of Yarborough; Sir John Ramsden, Bt.; Sir Hugh P. Lane; the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan; Major Charles Palmer; and the Barber-Surgeons' Company. Special thanks are due to Lord St. Oswald for permitting the large "More Family Group" at Nostell Priory to be photographed for the purposes of this book, and for allowing the writer to take notes from a very interesting manuscript containing a description of the various versions of the Family picture compiled by his grandfather, Mr. Charles Winn. He has also to record his great indebtedness to Mr. Ayerst H. Buttery for giving him the privilege of reproducing the recently discovered portrait of an Unknown English Lady, formerly in the possession of the Bodenham family at Rotherwas, near Hereford. His thanks also are due to Senhor José de Figueiredo, director of the National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon, for permission to include the elder Holbein's "Fountain of Life" among the illustrations, as well as to the directors of a number of galleries and museums, including the Public Picture Collection, Basel; the National Gallery, British Museum, and Wallace Collection; the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin; the Imperial Gallery, Vienna; the Louvre, Paris; the Royal Picture Gallery, The Hague; the Metropolitan Museum of New York; the Royal Hermitage Gallery, St. Petersburg; and the Galleries of Dresden, Munich, Hanover, Rome, Florence, Solothurn, and elsewhere.

In addition, he has the pleasure of recording his great indebtedness to Mr. Lionel Cust, M.V.O., for kind assistance and advice; to Mr. Maurice W. Brockwell, for much valuable help in many directions; to Mr. Campbell Dodgson, who was good enough to assist in the selection of woodcuts from the British Museum Collection for the purposes of reproduction; to Dr. George C. Williamson, through whose kindness the writer has been able to make use of his Catalogue of the

late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan's Collection of Miniatures ; to the Editors of the *Burlington Magazine of Fine Arts* for permission to include the writer's paper on Holbein's visit to " High Burgony " ; to Mr. James Melville for transcribing from the Balcarres MSS. a long letter from the Duchess of Guise referring to that visit ; to Herr F. Engel-Gros for information about the interesting roundel in his possession, which possibly represents the painter Lucas Hornebolt ; and to Dr. James H. W. Laing, of Dundee, to whom he is deeply indebted for most generously undertaking the very onerous task of reading the whole of the proofs. He wishes also to offer his grateful thanks to his publishers, and in particular to Mr. Hugh Allen, for the great care and trouble they have spent upon the book, and for their hearty co-operation in attempting to make it as complete a record as possible of the great master to whom it is devoted.

A. B. C.

BIRMINGHAM, *August* 1913.

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EDITORIAL—*THE DUVEEN SCULPTURE GALLERIES*

IN a country where art galleries, like hospitals, depend to a large extent on private charity, we can have nothing but praise for the munificence of Lord Duveen's new gift to the nation. It is a gesture of lavish proportions and noble motive. Nor can we question the good intentions of those responsible for the execution of this project. The donor in particular must be explicitly dissociated from any criticism of the new sculpture galleries opened by His Majesty the King on June 29th. These represent a tradition of long standing but none the less open to serious objection.

The present freshness of the stone-facings, the general air of cleanliness and neatness, above all the good lighting, make an agreeable impression. Many people, no doubt, will be satisfied with this, giving no thought to the primary function of the gallery, which is not to create a general impression of any kind, however agreeable, but rather to exhibit—that is to say, show to the best advantage—certain works of art.

We do not propose to discuss on this occasion the principles of segregation. It has been decided to exhibit the modern sculpture at Millbank in independent galleries, and not in association with contemporary paintings. Accepting this decision, we question the manner in which it has been implemented. The new galleries are designed to form what is described as an architectural "vista". The first gallery is 100 feet long by 34 feet wide and 50 feet high, and is divided from a central "rotunda" by a double screen of immense Ionic columns with full entablatures surrounded by a wide coffered arch. The Rotunda Gallery is 73 feet wide and the height to the eye of the dome is 61 feet. Another screen of Ionic columns divides it from the third gallery, which is 118 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 50 feet high. This gallery has six recessed bays, the dividing piers—15 feet wide—being "adorned with niches and pedestals." Altogether there are thirty-two columns and pilasters.

Against this architectural plenitude, bathed in light but sunk in a well of stone, a few incongruous pieces of sculpture struggle to be seen. We refrain from any comment on the æsthetic merits of these distressed nymphs and orators; the official notice from which we have already quoted admits that the art of sculpture "has languished in Great Britain," and it would seem that one of the purposes of this new gallery is to inspire a renaissance. The plinths are empty and the niches unadorned. The British sculptor must now take a larger studio and attempt some rhetoric arresting enough to tell against this insistent Ionic splendour.

We do not wish to suggest that there exists a single rigid formula for the architecture and arrangement of museums. But the experience gained in the last fifty years all over the world tends to reveal two, and only two, satisfactory principles, for both of which there is a good deal to be said. The work of art is a fragment torn from the context of time; we can either attempt to restore that context by reconstructing a sympathetic environment such as the work of art enjoyed when it was originally created; or, recognizing the hazard of all such attempts, we can concentrate attention on the uniqueness and individuality of the work of art itself.

The new sculpture galleries might, conceivably, have included a neo-classical room in which the sculpture of Despiau and Maillol would have found a congenial atmosphere; and atmospheres might have been evoked to accommodate the romantic frenzies of a Rodin or the frigid conventionalities of our own academicians. But there is a physical limit to the provision of separate accommodation for all the vagaries of the modern spirit, and we must conclude that the best solution would have been a building neutral in its atmosphere, harmonious in its proportions, and functional in its dimensions. The new galleries, in our opinion, fail to satisfy these elementary conditions.

"LE RÊVE DE L'ARTISTE" BY ANTOINE WATTEAU

BY TANCRED BORENIUS

THE enchanting picture by Watteau from the David Weill collection, which forms the subject of this note, has hitherto, so far as I am aware, not been reproduced in the Watteau literature strictly speaking; though a charming appreciation of it appears in M. Louis Gillet's volume on the master[1] and it is, of course, noted and reproduced in the Illustrated Catalogue of the David Weill collection which has been printed privately.[2]

The subject—"The Artist's Dream"—is here conceived and carried out with a delightful fantasy and subtle self-depreciation which strike the characteristic Watteau note. The scene is set in a romantic garden such as we know from ever so many *Fêtes galantes*; in the foreground on the left stands

[1] LOUIS GILLET: *Watteau* (Paris, n.d.), p. 212-213.

[2] *Collection David Weill.* Tome premier. *Peintures*, p. 385-386.

the easel at which the artist has been working. The artist is clearly Watteau himself; for it is a typically Watteauesque company of characters that, in the artist's vision during his swoon, suddenly descending from the clouds, have peopled the stage. In the foreground, four dancers are treading a measure on the lawn; a numerous gathering of others—including several familiar characters from the Italian Comedy, such as Harlequin and Columbine, Pierrot and Gilles—are grouped among the clouds; at the summit of the composition, surrounded by a bevy of Cupids, the scene is presided over by "*une Vénus en grand gala d'opéra de Lulli*," as M. Gillet has so aptly expressed it. Turned away from his easel, the artist's vision of this strange and yet familiar invasion sends him into startled despair—is it, one wonders, a despair which springs from a sentiment akin to that of the Moslem belief that on Judgment Day all painted characters will demand a soul from their creator? Or is it a feeling allied to that which, during his period of insanity, tormented the mind of Hugo van der Goes?—the fear that he would never be able to paint all the pictures that he was to paint? Whatever the precise nature of the sentiment underlying the conception, Watteau has here given us a scene of strangely haunting poetry—one which will strike a singularly sympathetic chord in a generation which has grown to love kindred visions in terms of ballet. Indeed, writing in this year of grace 1937, I shall not be misunderstood as conveying anything but praise by saying that the whole—working up as a coherent ensemble from the magnificent figure of the protagonist—is a masterpiece of choreography.

The picture was formerly in the collection of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, and it has been surmised from this circumstance that it belongs to the period which saw Watteau's visit to England in 1719. The characteristics of style certainly agree with such a late date in the master's career. For the principal figure there is a sheet of studies, also in the David Weill collection.[3]

[3] *Collection David Weill.* Tome troisiême *Dessins.* p.517.

HOLBEIN'S LAST SELF-PORTRAIT

BY PAUL GANZ

THE Self-portrait of Holbein at the age of forty-five, here published [PLATE I, A], shows the artist looking at the spectator while working at his easel. The pose of the head and the mention of his age indicate close relationship to a preliminary drawing by the master in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence, made for a life-size self-portrait, now lost. It was only through its purchase in 1730, for Cardinal Leopold of Medici's collection of artists' portraits, that this drawing, executed in the manner of the portrait-studies of his second English sojourn, became known; but it has suffered so severely by alterations and retouches made to adapt it to the measurements of the other portraits in the Cardinal's collection, that of the original drawing only the general lines of the face remain[1]. The painting of the same size as the drawing has never been located, but there is a strong probability that the composition is preserved for us in reduced dimensions in the panel of 1542[2].

Holbein often painted smaller replicas of portraits of larger size, and mostly used round wooden boxes, the picture being painted on the bottom of the box. The Kunsthistorisches Museum at Vienna owns two small circular panels of 1534 which are the bottom and the lid of the very same box[3]. Two of these small circular portraits—*Hans of Antwerp*[4] and *Sir Henry Guldeford*[5]— which Holbein executed after the large half-length portraits now in Windsor Castle, provide definite proof that this conjecture is correct, and also make clear the relationship of our small Self-portrait to the drawing at Florence. This little portrait bears the same indication of the age of the artist as the drawing at Florence, but it also shows his initials " H. H." and the date, 1542, which is found neither on the study nor on the many copies made of it. Holbein, therefore, portrayed himself the year before his death.

On an old copy of the Self-portrait of 1542 of the same size, the date was altered to 1543 in the course of a later restoration[6], the original figure not having been then clearly legible. The date 1543 re-appears on all the painted and engraved reproductions of this portrait which were executed after Holbein's death, but it only refers to the year of his death and not to the date of the portrait.

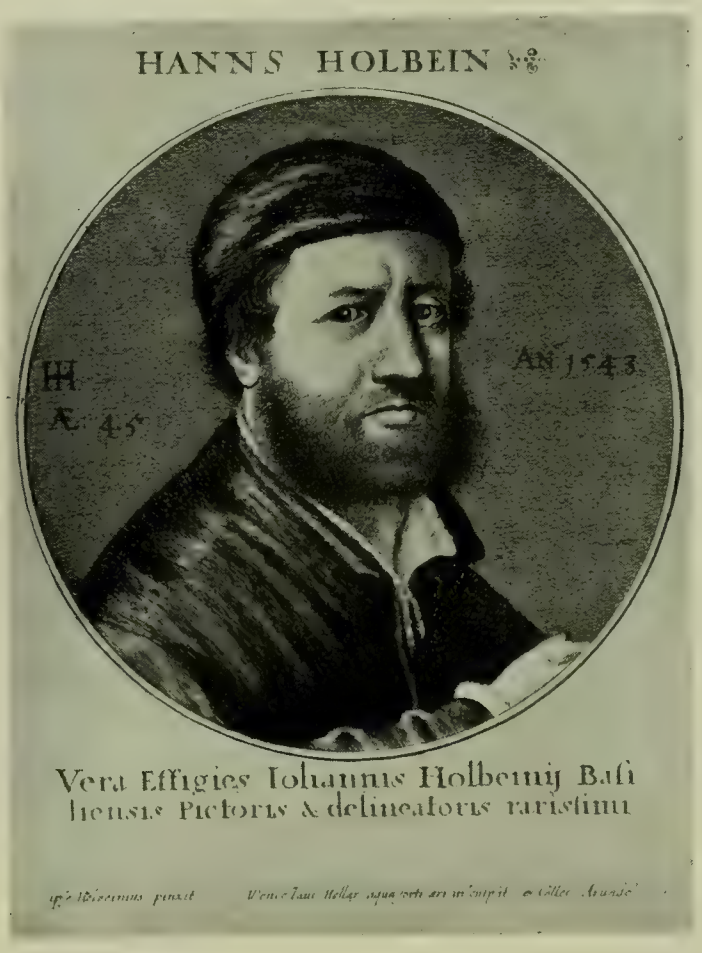
The three little miniature-portraits[7] in the Wallace Collection, the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch and the Museum van den Bergh at Antwerp are contemporary but not original replicas of the Self-portrait of 1542; they all bear the date 1543 and were undoubtedly executed for Holbein's patrons after his death. They are all too smooth and do not show the master's unerring precision of line. Holbein's Self-portraits are very rare and generally in bad condition, like the two well known drawings

[1] PAUL GANZ: "Das Bildnis Hans Holbeins d. J." *Jahrbuch für Kunst und Kunstpflege in der Schweiz.* V. [1928-29], with 14 ill.
[2] *Loc-cit.*, Plate I [in colour].
[3] *Hans Holbein d. J. Des Meisters Gemälde*, p. 105.
[4] In the collection of the Duke of Brunswick at Blankenburg.
[5] In the Detroit Institute of Arts, U.S.A.; published by W. R. VALENTINER in *Art in America.* [1927].
[6] WORNUM: *Some Account of the Life and Works of Hans Holbein.* London [1867], p. 82.
[7] The three miniatures are reproduced in: *Hans Holbein d. J. Des Meisters Gemälde*, p. 150; Catalogue of the Victoria and Albert Museum: *Ninety-six Miniatures from the Collection lent by the Duke of Buccleuch* [1916-17]. Plate 3, No. 8; and in the *Catalogue de la Collection Meyer van den Bergh*, Antwerp.



A—SELF-PORTRAIT, BY HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER. 1542. PANEL ; DIAMETER 10.5 CM. (DR. G. H. A. CLOWES, U.S.A.)





HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER. ENGRAVINGS AFTER A SELF-PORTRAIT. *B*—BY LUCAS VORSTERMAN. ABOUT 1624-29. DIAMETER, 11.7 CM. ; *C*—BY WENZEL HOLLAR. 1647. DIAMETER, 10.5 CM.

PLATE I. HOLBEIN'S LAST SELF-PORTRAIT



A—HANS OF ANTWERP, BY HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER. 1532. PANEL; DIAMETER, 10 CM. (THE DUKE OF BRUNSWICK).





HANS OF ANTWERP, ENGRAVED AFTER PLATE II, A ERRONEOUSLY TO REPRESENT HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER. *B*—BY ANDRIES STOCK. UNDATED. 22.2 BY 16.8 CM. *C*—BY HENDRIK HONDIUS. AFTER 1618. 16.3 BY 12.4.

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Reproduced in colour.
Public Picture Collection, Basel.

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Mr. Ayerst H. Buttery, London.

NOTE

The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes to this book :—

C.L.P., for Calendars of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.

Davies, for *Hans Holbein the Younger* (Gerald S. Davies).

Ganz, *Holbein*, for *Holbein d. J., des Meisters Gemälde in 252 Abbildungen* (Klassiker der Kunst).

Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, for *Handzeichnungen Schweizerischer Meister*, ed. Dr. Paul Ganz.

Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, for *Handzeichnungen von Hans Holbein dem Jüngeren.*

Woltmann, for *Holbein und seine Zeit* (A. Woltmann).

Wornum, for *Some Account of the Life and Works of Hans Holbein* (R. N. Wornum).

In order to obviate the constant use of a somewhat long official title, the Public Picture Collection, Basel, is generally referred to in this book as the Basel Gallery.

Hans Holbein the Younger

CHAPTER I

HANS HOLBEIN THE ELDER AND HIS FAMILY

The Holbein family in Switzerland and South Germany—Michel Holbein, the leather-dresser—Hans Holbein the Elder, citizen of Augsburg—His brother Sigmund, and his two sons, Ambrosius and Hans—The art of Hans Holbein the Elder and his position in the German School of painting—His principal pictures—Work in Ulm and Frankfurt—Paintings for the Convent of St. Catherine in Augsburg—Work for the Church of St. Moritz—Monetary difficulties—The St. Sebastian altar-piece—the "Fountain of Life" at Lisbon—His silver-point portrait drawings—His death at Isenheim.



URING the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the name of Holbein was not uncommon in various parts of Southern Germany and Switzerland. At Ravensburg, near Lake Constance, a family of that name had settled as paper manufacturers, their trade-mark being a bull's head, which was also used by Hans Holbein in his coat of arms. The name is also found in the records of the town of Grünstadt, in Rhenish Bavaria, during the same centuries; while for a still longer period members of a Holbein family were living in Basel, where they had a house called "Zum Papst" in the Gerbergasse. It was from this branch that the painter was in all probability descended,[1] and it is also possible that the Basel and Ravensburg Holbeins were connected. This relationship between the three branches may have been one of the reasons which induced the youthful Hans to turn his face towards Switzerland when he finally left Augsburg, the city of his birth.

In Augsburg itself the first reference to a burgher bearing the name of Holbein occurs in the middle of the fifteenth century. In 1448 a certain Michel Holbein, who had been living at Oberschönefeld, in the near neighbourhood, moved into Augsburg, and settled there permanently. In the first entry in the records in which his

[1] Anton Werner, *Der Sammler*, No. 143, 1907.

name occurs he is called "Michel von Schönenfeld," but in 1454 his surname is given as "Holbain," this being the common spelling of the name in Augsburg at that time, or, less frequently, "Holpain." This Michel Holbein, who came from Oberschönefeld, and died in Augsburg about 1497, and at one time was regarded as the father of Hans Holbein the Elder, is no longer considered to be identical with the latter, who was also named Michel and was a leather-dresser by trade. From 1464 to 1475 the last-named was living in a house of his own, No. 472A in the Vorderer Lech, which is spoken of as "Michel Holbains Hus," or "Domus Michel Holbains." After 1475 he changed his dwelling more than once, and his several removals can be traced from the rate-books, in which his addresses at various dates are given as "Salta zum Schlechtenbad," "Vom Bilgrimhaus," "Vom Nagengast," "In der Prediger Garten," and so on. All these places were in the Vorderer and Mittlerer Lech, in that part of the city to the east of the Maximilianstrasse known as the Diepold, in the neighbourhood of the Lech canals and streams, by which Augsburg is watered, along the banks of which most of the smaller trades of the city were carried on and the workshops of the artificers and metal-workers were situated. In the years 1479, 1481, and 1482 Michel Holbein was absent from Augsburg, and appears to have left his wife behind him, for in 1481 it is noted against her in the rate-book that her husband was not with her ("Ihr Mann nicht bei ihr"). Michel Holbein died probably about the year 1484.[1] His widow, whose name first occurs in the town records in 1469, continued to move from house to house, her addresses being given as "in der Strasse Am Judenberg," "Von Sant Anthonino," "Vom Diepolt," and beyond the Sträfinger Gate.

The name of "Hanns Holbain" first appears in the records in the year 1494. This was the painter usually known as Hans Holbein the Elder, to distinguish him from his more celebrated son. Although there is no actual proof of the relationship, there is every reason to believe that Hans the Elder was one of the sons of Michel the currier. He lived in the same quarter of the city as the latter, his address in 1494 being in the "Strasse vom Diepolt," and two years later in the "Salta zum Schlechtenbad." More than once Hans Holbein's mother is mentioned as living with him, thus evidently at that time

[1] Anton Werner, *Der Sammler*, No. 143, 1907.

a widow, which affords further proof in favour of the connection.[1] In 1504 it is recorded that Sigmund, his brother, was living in the same house with Hans, which confirms the statement by J. von Sandrart, one of the earliest of Holbein's biographers, in his *Teutsche Akademie* (1675), that the elder Hans Holbein and Sigmund were brothers, a relationship of which absolute proof is to be found in the latter's will. Sigmund was born after 1477, was of age in 1503, and died in Berne in 1540.[2] The two painter brothers had several sisters. Between 1478 and 1480 the records speak of a daughter, Barbara von Oberhausen, as living with her mother, Michel Holbainin, and a few years later a second daughter, Anna Holbainin, who is sometimes called by the diminutive name "Endlin." There appear to have been four sisters in all, but Sigmund Holbein mentions only three of them in his will, Barbara being apparently dead—Ursel (Ursula) Nepperschmid, of Augsburg; Anna Elchinger, living by St. Ursula am Schwall, in the same city; and Margreth Herwart, at Esslingen. The name of this last sister, Margaret, occurs in the town records from 1502 as "Gret" or "Margreth Holbainin." In 1493 there is a reference to an "Ottilia Holbainlin," but the use of the diminutive in this case suggests that she was a small child, and, therefore, more probably a daughter rather than a sister of Hans Holbein the Elder.

At one time, before these authentic records of the Holbein family had been unearthed from the Steuerbücher and Gerichtsbücher of Augsburg, it was believed that a third painter named Hans Holbein had existed, the father of Hans Holbein the Elder. Attention was first called to him by Passavant in 1846, in connection with a painting then in the possession of Herr Samm of Mergenthau, and now in the Augsburg Museum. This picture, which represents the Virgin Mary seated on a grassy bank by a wall, with the Infant Christ in her arms, is signed "Hans Holbein, C.A. (*i.e.* Civis Augustanus) 1459," a date too early for the picture to have been painted by Hans Holbein the Elder; but the inscription has been proved to be a forgery. Further proof of the existence of this painter was thought to have been discovered in connection with a second picture, forty years later in date, and in reality from the hand of Hans Holbein the Elder. It is one of a series of six pictures representing the principal basilicas of

[1] Entries in the Augsburg Bürgerbuch and Steuerbücher.
[2] See Glaser, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, p. 171.

Rome, ordered by the nuns of St. Catherine in Augsburg in 1496, on the occasion of the reconstruction of their convent. The names of the several donors of these pictures, with the prices and other details, are preserved in the annals of the convent, compiled by the nun Dominica Erhardt from old records and documents. Extracts from this work were supplied to Passavant, including one with reference to the picture of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, now in the Augsburg Gallery (Nos. 62–64), which is signed "Hans Holbain" on the two bells in the tower, and bears the date 1499. The passage in question is as follows :—

"Item Dorothea Rölingerin hat lassen machen unser lieben frauen Taffel, die gestatt oder steht 45 gulden. Vom alten Hans Holbein hie." (Item. Dorothea Rölingerin has ordered of old Hans Holbein a panel painting of our dear Lady for the sum of 45 gulden.)

The term "old Holbein," Passavant thought, could only be applied to the grandfather of the family, for in 1499 Hans Holbein the Younger was still a little child, and his father too young a man to be termed "the old." Later researches, however, proved that the extracts supplied to Passavant were incorrect, containing numerous amplifications and spurious additions not to be found in the original document, which, after considerable search, was discovered by Dr. Woltmann in the Episcopal Library in Augsburg. In the original record the price paid for the picture is given as 60 gulden, and neither the name of "old Holbein" nor of any other painter occurs, so that the myth of the grandfather Hans was finally demolished.

There is no record of the birth of Hans Holbein the Elder; but as the earliest dated picture by him so far discovered was painted in 1493, it is supposed to have taken place about 1473–4.[1] There is equal lack of information as to the date of his marriage or the name of his wife. It was believed at one time, on the authority of Paul von Stetten, that she was the daughter of Thomas Burgkmair, and sister of the more famous Hans Burgkmair, and that the young couple lived with their father-in-law; but no confirmation of this legend has been discovered. The two families dwelt in the same street, "Vom Diepolt," but Burgkmair's house was No. 7, while Holbein's was No. 17. His family, as far as is known, consisted only of his two sons, Ambrosius and Hans. A third son, Bruno, is mentioned

[1] *Katalog der Œffentlichen Kunstsammlung in Basel*, 1908, p. 66.

by Remigius Faesch (1651) in his manuscript notes preserved in the Basel Library, compiled from information supplied to him from the Amerbach papers; but beyond this short notice, and a repetition of it by Patin, there is no trace of a Bruno Holbein to be found. There are two silver-point drawings, one of the head of a child in the Bernburg Library,[1] and the other of a mitred bishop in the Albertina, Vienna,[2] both dated 1515 and signed with the letters B. H. in monogram, which it has been suggested are the work of the supposed Bruno. Dr. Woltmann, however, considered them to be by Ambrosius Holbein. The latter, he says, was known by the diminutive name of "Prosy" in the family circle, and as at that time in Germany the letters *p* and *b* were often used indifferently—as can be seen in the spelling of Holbein's own name in the Augsburg records, where it is sometimes given as "Holbain," and sometimes as "Holpain"—it may well be that the monogram on these two drawings is that of "Prosy" or "Brosy" Holbein.[3] Modern criticism, however, has shown that the attribution of these two drawings to Ambrosius is a wrong one.[4]

Hans Holbein the Elder, whose exceptional ability as an artist has always been overshadowed by the greater genius of his celebrated son, was one of the most representative painters of the Swabian School at the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. His art, more particularly, but not only, in its earlier manifestations, shows the influence of Martin Schongauer, and, through Schongauer, that of Rogier van der Weyden and the Flemish School. The influence of Schongauer upon him is at times so marked that it has been suggested that he may have studied under him at Colmar during his younger days. Whether this be true or not, it is evident that Holbein was still under the spell of Schongauer's painting during his stay in Isenheim towards the end of his life. The "Fountain of Life," painted there in 1519, owed much of its inspiration to Schongauer's "Madonna in the Rose Garden," which Holbein must have seen in the not far-distant city of Colmar. Both in the types of his figures and the management of his draperies, as well as in the arrangement of his compositions, there is an echo of Schongauer's art, which, however, may not have been derived through personal contact with that painter, but largely from the study of his numerous engravings,

[1] Woltmann, A. H., 20.
[2] Woltmann, A. H., 25.
[3] Woltmann, *Holbein und seine Zeit*, i. 67.
[4] See Willy Hes, *Ambrosius Holbein*, p. 149.

which were widely popular throughout Southern Germany. Schongauer himself, whose father, Kasper Schongauer, was an Augsburg painter, had studied, or, at least, had come much under the influence of, Rogier van der Weyden at Tournai, and had caught from him something of the sweetness and grace which characterised the finest Flemish art of that day. These characteristics, and others representative of the school, he handed on in his turn to the Swabian painters, the elder Holbein among them. Hans Burgkmair was one of Schongauer's pupils, and was afterwards a near neighbour of Holbein, so that he also may have been an inspiring force in the moulding of the art of both the older and the younger Hans. Another of Schongauer's followers, Bartolomaeus Zeitblom of Ulm, is also considered to have had some influence upon the elder Holbein's painting. The latter, at one period of his career, became a citizen of Ulm, where he must have encountered Zeitblom, the leading painter of that city. Thus his earlier works show a gradual fusion of the methods of the old German or Rhenish School with those of the Flemings. He began to paint in the days when German art was almost uninfluenced by the great Italian Renaissance, which was gradually but surely spreading over Europe, but before the close of his career he had succumbed to its spell. A chronological examination of his later works shows what a vitalising force his study of Italian models had upon his style, though he did not accept these changes as easily or as rapidly as some of his contemporaries, such as Burgkmair. Unlike the latter, however, he never paid a visit to Italy, but he nevertheless found it impossible in the end to resist the new artistic impulses with which that country was then flooding the rest of Europe. It was not necessary for him, however, to cross the Alps in order to experience the magic spell of the new teaching, for Augsburg was one of the first of the South German towns to feel the effects of the Renaissance. The two chief routes from Italy, the western one from Milan, and the eastern road from Venice, met at its gates. The greater part of the trade between the Venetian States and Germany passed through the city, and its leading merchants had business branches in Venice and other North Italian towns. Many members of the Fugger and other patrician families of Augsburg spent long periods in the districts immediately south of the Alps, for the purpose of extending their trade connections; and the active commercial inter-

course with Italy which resulted brought not only riches to the Augsburgers, but knowledge and love of the new culture as well, and thus through the old free city of Swabia the intellectual and artistic wealth of the Renaissance made its way into Germany. The elder Holbein was among those who reaped advantage from this intercourse between the two countries. Without entirely abandoning the solid German groundwork of his art, he stripped it, more particularly in his management of draperies, of many of its hardnesses. His colour grew more harmonious, and his handling broader and more free. His figures became less attenuated, and his heads, treated with greater realism, displayed more character, while the general composition of his pictures showed a greater dignity of conception and a deeper sense of beauty. In addition to these gradual changes in his art, the new influence wrought a complete alteration in his methods of dealing with all accessories and with the architectural backgrounds against which his subjects were placed, Renaissance forms and ornamentation taking the place of the earlier Gothic settings.

The earliest dated pictures which can be ascribed to him with any certainty are four altar-panels in the Cathedral of Augsburg, of the year 1493, which at one time formed the two wings of an altar-piece in the Abbey of Weingarten, representing Joachim's Sacrifice, the Birth and the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, and the Presentation of Christ.[1] They display a strong Flemish influence, with a warm, luminous colour, and considerable dignity and sense of beauty in the figures.

His next pictures of which the date is certain are of the year 1499,[2] and include the picture of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore,[3] the work already mentioned as ordered by Dorothea Rölingerin[4] for the Convent of St. Catherine in Augsburg, and at one time attributed to the mythical grandfather Hans. It is a panel in the form of a broad pointed arch, corresponding, like the five other pictures of the series, with the vaulting of the chamber for which

[1] Woltmann, 1–4. The first and third reproduced by Curt Glaser, *Hans Holbein der Ältere* Pl. ii.

[2] The "Death of Mary" in the Basel Gallery, formerly part of the Afra altar-piece in the chapel of the Kaisheimer-Hofes in Augsburg, bears an almost illegible date, which the Basel catalogue gives as 1490, but is more probably 1495. See Curt Glaser, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, p. 23, and Pl. iii.

[3] Woltmann, 5. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. v.; Davies (central part), p. 4.

[4] Or Rehlingen.

it was painted. It contains four scenes in three sections, divided from one another by gilded Gothic ornamentation. The lower half of the central compartment contains a view of the church, with a pilgrim kneeling at the altar. On the two bells is inscribed "Hans Holba—in 1499," while an "H" is on one of the tombstones, and the date is repeated on the outer wall of the church. The upper part of the arch is filled with the Crowning of the Virgin. The division on the left contains St. Joseph and the Virgin adoring the Child in the stable, that on the right the Martyrdom of St. Dorothea, in honour of the donor of the picture, who is represented, a small figure, kneeling in prayer behind the saint. This picture is now in the Augsburg Museum (Nos. 62–64).

A second work in the same gallery (No. 61), of the same date, is, however, far inferior to the foregoing, the execution being careless and perfunctory. It was a commission from the nun Walburg Vetter, also for the Convent of St. Catherine, as an offering from herself, and in memory of her two sisters, Veronica and Christina, all three of whom lived, died, and were buried in the convent; and the indifference of the workmanship has been attributed to the fact that Holbein received extremely poor payment for it, only 26 gulden in all. It has an arched top, and is divided into a number of small compartments, with the Crowning of the Virgin above, and six roughly-painted scenes from Christ's Passion below, in which the figures, more particularly of the executioners, are extremely repulsive. It is dated, and contains a long inscription.[1]

Shortly after he had sent out this very inferior example of his art from his workshop, Holbein appears to have left Augsburg for a year or two, and to have settled in Ulm. His name is found in the Augsburg rate-books every year from 1494 to 1499, but is missing in 1500 and 1501, while there is a document in the Augsburg archives, dated Wednesday, November 6, 1499, which proves that in that year he had become for the time being a citizen of Ulm ("Hannsen Holbain dem Maller, jetzo Bürger zu Ulm"),[2] though no traces remain of any work undertaken by him in that city. This entry is in connection with the contract for the purchase of a house in Augsburg from which Holbein received interest.

[1] Woltmann, 6. See Glaser, p. 36.

[2] Woltmann, i. 49. First cited by Hassler in *Verhandlungen des Vereins für Kunst und Altertum in Ulm und Oberschwaben*, ix. and x., 1855, p. 79.

In 1501 he was in Frankfurt, engaged upon an altar-piece for the Dominican convent church. Two large panels, which once formed the back of the centre portion of this work, represent the genealogy of Christ and that of the Dominicans,[1] each in two divisions. On the first there is a Latin inscription stating that the work was executed in 1501 to the order of the Superior, one "I. W.," and concluding with the words, "HANS HOILBAYN DE AVGVSTA ME PINXIT." These panels are now in the Städtisches Museum in Frankfurt, together with seven out of eight scenes of "Christ's Passion," which originally covered the outer and inner sides of the wings of the same altar-piece.[2]

In 1502 he was back again in Augsburg, at work upon a large altar-piece for the monastery of Kaisheim at Donauwörth. Sixteen portions of it, which formed the inner and outer panels of the folding doors, are now in the Munich Gallery (Nos. 193–208).[3] Between the years 1490 and 1509 the Abbot Georg Kastner spent much money on the adornment of the fine Gothic church of this famous imperial monastery, and in an old manuscript chronicle which has survived, there is a passage referring to this particular altar-piece, from which it is to be gathered that two other artificers of Augsburg, the sculptor Gregorius and the joiner Adolph Kastner, were associated with Holbein in the work. It speaks of them as three masters of Augsburg, who were the best masters far and near. The panels from the outer sides of the shutters represent scenes from the Passion, those from the inner ones incidents in the life of the Virgin and the childhood of Christ. The former are of inferior workmanship to the latter, and were no doubt produced wholly or in great part by an apprentice or assistant, for they display many exaggerated and grotesque types and a general lack of taste in composition. The inner panels show a far higher standard, and are from the hand of the elder Holbein himself, whose signature occurs no less than three times as "J. H.," "Hans Holbon," and finally the inscription, "Depictum per Johannem Holbain Augustensem 1502." Studies for some of the heads are to be found in his sketch-book in the Basel Gallery. Several panels representing the martyrdom of the Apostles, at Nuremberg, Schleissheim, and elsewhere, have much in common with the Kaisheim altar-piece.

[1] Woltmann, 207–210. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xii.
[2] Three of them reproduced by Glaser, Pls. x. and xi.
[3] Woltmann, 238–253. Ten of the panels reproduced by Glaser, Pls. xiv.-xix.

In the same year (1502) Holbein was engaged for a second time upon work for the Convent of St. Catherine in Augsburg. This was a panel, in three compartments, representing the Transfiguration of Christ,[1] a commission from a leading Augsburg citizen, Ulrich Walther, whose daughters, Anna and Maria, were inmates of the convent, the former being the prioress. It is now in the Augsburg Gallery (Nos. 65–67). It was ordered to be made "to the praise of God and in honour of his two daughters," and the price paid was 54 gulden 30 kreuzers. Walther, who, dying at the age of eighty-six in 1505, left behind him one hundred and thirty-three living descendants, is represented kneeling in the lower part of the left-hand compartment, with eight sons behind him; and in the corresponding part of the opposite compartment are his wife, the two nuns, and twelve others, daughters and daughters-in-law, also kneeling in prayer. These portraits, of which those of the younger children in particular are of considerable charm, form the happiest part of the painting. In the central subject, the movements by which the Apostles express their surprise at the transfiguration of their Master are exaggerated almost to the point of caricature. The side panels represent the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, and the Healing of the Possessed Youth.

A much finer work, painted for the same convent, is the "Basilica of St. Paul,"[2] like the "Transfiguration," now in the Augsburg Gallery (Nos. 68–70). Although undated, it is usually ascribed to the year 1504. It was ordered by Veronica Welser, daughter of the Burgomaster Bartholomäus Welser. She was one of the wealthiest of the sisters, and was at that time secretary to the convent, and afterwards succeeded Anna Walther as prioress. It follows the shape of the other pictures in the cloisters, that of a broad pointed arch, and is divided into a central and two side panels, separated by late Gothic gilded ornamentation. It depicts scenes from the life of St. Paul. In the upper arched portion is the Mocking of Christ, while the lower compartments contain the Conversion, Baptism, Martyrdom, and Burial of St. Paul, with other events in his life in the background. In the central division Holbein has shown the donor seated in a chair in front of the basilica with her back to the spectator, an evident portrait, although the face is not visible. The name "Thecla" is

[1] Woltmann, 7. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xxii.
[2] Woltmann, 8. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xxvi.; Davies (left-hand panel only), p. 12.

written on the chair-back. The division on the left hand is of much greater interest, for it contains portraits of the Holbein family, including the earliest but one known of Hans Holbein the Younger. The subject is the Baptism of St. Paul (Pl. 1), who is represented, a nude figure, standing in a stone font in the foreground. In the right-hand foreground the artist has placed a group of three spectators, a middle-aged man and two small boys, representing, according to old tradition, the painter himself and his two sons, Ambrosius and Hans. The truth of this tradition is confirmed by three drawings by the elder Holbein which still exist—one, a head of himself, a study for the St. Sebastian altar-piece, inscribed "Hanns Holbain maler—Der alt," now in the Aumale Collection at Chantilly;[1] and the others, in the Berlin Print Room, representing the two boys in the years 1502 and 1511.[2] In the picture the painter himself, with long hair and a flowing beard, but the upper lip shaved, and dressed in a fur-lined coat, stands with his right hand resting upon the head of the younger boy, and with the first finger of his left points towards him as though wishing to draw particular attention to him. Ambrosius, with his hair curling upon his shoulders, stands with his right hand placed affectionately upon his younger brother's shoulder, and with his left clasps the other's hand. Both boys are dressed in grey cloth gowns, with gaiters and thick shoes, the elder having a pen-case and ink-bottle suspended from his girdle. Hans, a big-headed, round-faced, chubby little lad, six or seven years old, has shorter hair. One hand is raised to his chest, and the other grasps a stick. The father's face is not a highly intellectual one, but is sensitive and amiable; that of the boy Hans is stronger in character, with a fine forehead and good mouth. On the opposite side of the picture there stands a lady, seen in profile, with plaited golden hair and a white head-dress. Her costume is a rich one, with brocaded sleeves, and the lower part of her skirts edged with pearls. Tradition, which is possibly correct, declares this lady to be the mother of the two boys. There is considerable likeness between her and Ambrosius, and it is evident that she is taking no part in the incident of the Baptism beyond that of a very passive spectator. The

[1] Glaser, 230. Woltmann, 277. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. i.

[2] Glaser, 218 and 153. Woltmann, 160 and 170. The first reproduced by W. Hes (*Ambrosius Holbein*), Pl. i. (2), and by Woltmann and Frisch in *Hans Holbein des Ä. Silberstiftzeich. im Berlin*, Pl. 64; the second by Glaser, Pl. xxxvii.; Davies, p. 1; Woltmann, vol. i., frontispiece; and elsewhere.

costume she wears precludes her from being the donor of the picture, who, indeed, is already represented in the central compartment. Holbein apparently introduced his whole family into the work. The only reason for throwing doubt on the tradition lies in the elaborate dress she is wearing, which seems too sumptuous for a poor painter's wife; for the elder Holbein at this period of his life was in frequent difficulties over money. Mr. Gerald Davies draws attention to a drawing by him in coloured chalks in the Munich Print Room, which, he thinks, represents the wife some years earlier, perhaps before her marriage.[1] "It is," he says, "a very charming drawing of a young woman, not of any special beauty beyond that which belongs to every young face which has the sparkle of happy pleasure in the lips and eyes; the hair is partly covered with a white cap, into which some delicate yellow is touched, and she wears yellow sleeves and bands of the same colour across the white chest front. Allowing for some years' difference in age, this may well, I think, be the same person as she who appears in the Augsburg picture. But, whether it be the mother of the great painter or no, it is certainly a study which shows Hans Holbein the Elder to have been possessed in some degree of those very qualities in which his son afterwards stood supreme. There is something of the same sympathetic power of seeing, and the same completeness of recording what has been seen, without pedantries and without makeshifts, all that gives to any given human face its charm and its interest. . . . There is in it something of inspiration which neither care nor industry nor strength—and there are certainly artists stronger than he—can give. There is in this drawing the germ, and something more than the germ, of the spirit of his great son."[2]

This altar-piece, in which the figures are represented at about one-third the size of life, marks a considerable advance in Holbein's art, both in technical qualities, the harmony of colouring, and in the drawing of the figures and natural arrangement of the draperies. When ordering the picture, Veronica Welser at the same time commissioned Hans Burgkmair to paint one of the Basilica of Santa Croce and the legend of St. Ursula. Only one payment, 187 gulden, is recorded for the two. As Burgkmair's picture is dated 1504, it is natural to suppose that Holbein's altar-piece was painted at about the same time.

[1] Glaser, 233. Reproduced by Davies, p. 14.

[2] Davies, p. 16.



THE BAPTISM OF ST. PAUL

Left-hand panel of the "St. Paul" Altar-piece, with portraits of the Holbein Family

HANS HOLBEIN THE ELDER

AUGSBURG GALLERY



Between the years 1504 and 1508 Holbein found frequent employment in connection with the Church of St. Moritz in Augsburg. Various payments are recorded in the church account-books, but the pictures he painted cannot now be traced. Among them appear to have been two large altar-pieces, for which he frequently received small sums in advance at his own request. On the 28th October 1506, he agreed to supply four altar-panels for 100 gulden, receiving 10 gulden on account. Money was evidently scarce in the Holbein household in these years; he was even obliged to borrow 3 gulden from the churchwarden's wife. For the second altar-piece, commissioned on the 16th March 1508, he was to receive the considerable sum of 325 gulden; but, as he was evidently still in debt, the whole of the money was not paid directly to him, but was handed over to various creditors; thus 74 gulden was paid to one Thomas Freihamer. On the same occasion Holbein's wife received a present of 5 gulden from the church authorities, and his son, no doubt Ambrosius, one gulden.[1]

The elder Holbein, indeed, was often in monetary difficulties, more particularly towards the end of his life. From time to time he was sued for small sums by impatient creditors. In 1503 he went to law with a neighbour, Paulson Mair, and on the 10th May 1515 he was sued by his butcher, Ludwig Smid, for one gulden. In the following year he was twice in the courts, the second time at the suit of one Jörg Lotter for the small amount of 32 kreuzers. On the 12th January 1517 his own brother, Sigmund, was obliged to take proceedings against him for a debt of 34 florins, money advanced to enable Holbein to move his painting materials to "Eysznen"—that is, Isenheim in Alsace—to which place he went towards the end of 1516 for the purpose of painting an altar-piece for the monastery of St. Anthony. Once again, in 1521, a certain Hans Kämlin sued him before the justices for two sums of 40 kreuzers, and 2 florins 40 kreuzers. Thus, in spite of numerous commissions, which, however, were not always well-paid ones, he often had great difficulty in supporting his household in comfort.[2]

The scope of this book does not permit a detailed description,

[1] For details of these payments, taken from the account books St. Moritz, see Woltmann, ii. p. 30.

[2] Woltmann, i. pp. 96–97, ii. 31. (Extracts from the Augsburger Gerichtsbücher.)

or even a bare list, of his numerous works. Two only of his later, and probably his finest, paintings must be alluded to briefly—the "Martyrdom of St. Sebastian," in the Munich Gallery (Nos. 209–211), painted shortly before his departure from Augsburg to Isenheim, and the "Fountain of Life," in Lisbon, both of which were at one time ascribed to his younger son.[1] The "St. Sebastian" altar-piece,[2] which in earlier days was rightly regarded as a work of the elder Holbein, is thought to have been one of several commissions given to him by the nuns of St. Catherine in Augsburg. The entry in the archives which is supposed to refer to it merely states that "Sister Magdalena Imhoff has given 3 gulden to the new Sebastian, for the Holy Cross on the altar, and the lay sisters 2 florins. This is the cost of the said picture." Neither the name of the artist who was employed upon it nor the date of the order is given, and from the wording of the entry, and the very small price paid, it seems evident that it cannot refer to so important a painting as the "St. Sebastian." Dr. Woltmann was probably right in suggesting that what was ordered was merely a painted wooden figure of the saint, which was to be added to a carved group of the Crucifixion on the altar of the church.[3] The picture was first attributed to the younger Holbein by Passavant and Dr. Waagen, who were misled by the forged extracts from the St. Catherine annals, in which the passage quoted above was considerably amplified, the "St. Sebastian" being definitely described as a picture "by the skilful painter Holbein," with the additional information that it was ordered in 1515, and placed in the church in 1517, after its rebuilding, and that Magdalena Imhoff paid 10 gulden towards it, and the other lay sisters 2 gulden each. As a result of this falsification, the authorship of the picture was taken from the father and given to the son, and, in consequence, it was regarded for a number of years as an extraordinary manifestation of youthful genius. Even when the forgery was discovered, such critics as Dr. Woltmann and Mr. Wornum continued, from considerations of style, to uphold the picture as an early Augsburg work of the younger Holbein. The

[1] The altar-piece of 1512 for the Convent of St. Catherine is referred to in the next chapter. See pp. 23–5.

[2] Woltmann, 254–258. Central panel and inner sides of shutters reproduced by Glaser, Pls. xxx., xxxi.; the latter reproduced by Davies, p. 22; outer sides of shutters by Woltmann, vol. i. pp. 88, 89.

[3] Woltmann, i. 95.

inner and outer panels of the wings, in particular, were considered to afford undoubted proof, by their high artistic merit and their method of handling, that they were from the brush of the son; and some modern critics still maintain that, if not entirely his work, they were nevertheless carried out by him under his father's supervision, although they show a much more finished and mature style than is to be found in the first sacred paintings he produced in his early Basel days. Professor Karl Voll of Munich holds that no one but the younger Hans could have painted the lovely figures of St. Elizabeth and St. Barbara. Dr. Glaser, on the other hand, is of opinion that the whole altar-piece is the work of Hans Holbein the Elder. The picture is undated, though Passavant states that it is inscribed "1516." According to Förster, in 1840 the old frame bore the inscription "1516, H. Holbain." Dr. Woltmann placed it in the year 1515, but at that date the younger Hans had already left Augsburg for Basel. From considerations of style, however, and the strong Renaissance influence it displays, it is now generally considered to have been executed by Hans Holbein the Elder in or about 1516, prior to his departure from Augsburg to Isenheim.

Judged by his authentic works of this date in Basel, it is difficult to allow that the younger Holbein had any serious part in the painting of this altar-piece, though he may have worked on some of the details under his father's direction. Whether originally painted to the order of the nuns of St. Catherine or not, the picture is said to have been found in their possession on the abolition of the convent. It was acquired in 1809 from the church of St. Sauveur in Augsburg.

The central panel (Pl. 2) shows the nude figure of the saint, transfixed with arrows, his right arm fastened by a chain above his head to a fig-tree. Four archers at very close quarters are shooting at him, the one kneeling in the left foreground, in the act of bending his bow, being dressed in a striped costume of blue and white, the colours of Bavaria, the hereditary enemy of Augsburg. Behind them stand spectators in rich costumes, two on either side, the foremost one on the right being the officer of the Emperor Diocletian, who is directing the execution. In the background is a river, on the far side of which rise the towers and buildings of a city, with the Alps beyond. The outer panels of the shutters are painted with the "Annunciation to the Virgin," and the inner ones with the figures of St. Barbara and

St. Elizabeth (Pl. 3). St. Barbara, who is attired in a purple mantle, a blue dress embroidered with gold, and wide white puffed sleeves, holds a cup with the Host hovering over it. St. Elizabeth has also a purple mantle, and a dress edged with fur. With her left hand she gathers up her cloak, in which she is carrying bread for the poor, and with the other pours wine from a tankard into a shallow bowl held by one of the two beggars crouching at her feet. These two suppliants, both of whom are afflicted with leprosy, have been painted with extreme and even repulsive realism. Behind the leper on the right appears the head of the painter himself, kneeling in adoration. The background in both these panels is similar in character to the central one, that behind St. Elizabeth representing, so it is said, a view of the Wartburg, near Eisenach; while above and below are deep bands of rich Renaissance ornamentation, of the type of design which the younger Holbein afterwards carried to so high a degree of excellence. The whole work, though still retaining many indications of the earlier influences which moulded the elder Holbein's art, is strongly imbued with the newer conception of painting received from Italy. The drawing of the nude displays greater knowledge than in the "St. Paul" altar-piece, the colour is finer, and the figures of the two saints on the shutters possess much grace and beauty. There are several silver-point studies for the picture in the Copenhagen Museum, while the study for the head of Holbein himself is, as already pointed out, at Chantilly.

It is in the "Fountain of Life" (Pl. 4),[1] painted in 1519,[2] that the strongest proofs of the elder Holbein's final surrender to the influences of the Italian Renaissance are to be discovered. This picture, like more than one other of his works, was formerly ascribed to the son. Nothing is known of its earlier history, but it is said[3] to have been taken from England to Portugal by Catherine of Braganza, daughter of John IV of Portugal, and wife of Charles II, when she returned home a widow after the king's death in 1685, and that it was presented by her to the chapel of the castle of Bemposta, where it remained until removed to the royal palace in Lisbon forty or fifty years ago. It thus appears to have belonged to the royal collections

[1] Woltmann, vol. ii. p. 132, not numbered; reproduced by Glaser, Pls. xxxii., xxxiii.; A. Seeman, in *Zeitschr. f. bild. Kunst*, xiv. p. 197, 1903 (in colour); Arundel Club, 1907, Pl. 4.

[2] See note at end of this chapter.

[3] Raczynski, *Les Arts en Portugal*, 1846, p. 295.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. SEBASTIAN

Central Panel

Hans Holbein the Elder

Alte Pinakothek, Munich



ST. BARBARA ST. ELIZABETH

Inner sides of the wings of the St. Sebastian Altar-piece

Hans Holbein the Elder

Alte Pinakothek, Munich


SANCTA BARBARA
SANCTA ELISABET

of England in Charles II's time, but no traces of it are to be found in any inventory. If the picture ever was in this country, it can have been only for a short time, for about the year 1628 it was in the collection of the Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria, and is very carefully described in a manuscript catalogue of his pictures of that date, with the measurements, the date, and the name of the artist—"von Hanns Holpain ao 1519 gemalt."[1] It is signed "IOHANNES HOLBEIN FECIT 1519," but from its present condition this signature seems to have been painted over an older one. Attention was first called to the picture by Pietro Guarienti, keeper of the Dresden Gallery, who was in Portugal from 1733 to 1736. He read the name as "Holtein," and considered it to be the work of one of Holbein's pupils. This would indicate that the signature was then becoming illegible, and that it was renovated some time after Guarienti saw it. On the inner edge of the circular fountain in the foreground there is also an inscription, "PVTEVS AQVARVM VIVENTIVM," which has also been retouched by some clumsy hand, for the older writing, white on a brown ground, can still be seen beneath it.

The background, which occupies the upper half of the picture, is filled with a building or open loggia of very elaborate architecture in the style of the Italian Renaissance, with pillars of vari-coloured marbles, and capitals and friezes richly carved and decorated. In the central foreground, on the steps which ascend to this building, the Virgin appears, enthroned. The Infant Christ sits astride her right arm, firmly clasped against her breast. The Virgin appears to have been painted from the same model as the Virgin on the outer shutters of the "St. Sebastian" altar-piece. The Fountain of Life drips from a marble Cupid's mask on the step below her feet into a small circular basin, on the edge of which is placed a tall vase with a spray of white lilies. Behind her carved chair stand St. Joseph and St. Anne, and on either side of her are groups of three saints, the two foremost ones being seated, with the folds of their dresses spread over the flower-strewn grass. On the right is St. Dorothy, in a richly-brocaded costume, and behind her kneels St. Catherine of Alexandria with her right hand stretched towards the Infant Christ, as a sign of their betrothal. On the left St. Margaret is seated, with a book and a long cross, and a dragon at her feet, and behind her St. Barbara is

[1] Glaser, p. 100; Reber, in *Kunstchronik*, xiv. p. 493, 1903.

kneeling, holding the cup with the Host. Two other saints complete the near groups, and in the background a number of other saints are placed on either side. One of the figures is not unlike the so-called wife of Holbein in the "St. Paul" altar-piece. Still farther off, beyond the rails of the portico or temple, are three groups of singing and playing angels with vari-coloured wings. In the distance is an elaborate landscape, with a tall palm-tree, classical ruins, and a view of sea and mountains. Bands of dark cloud stretch across the sky, and the evening light still lingers over the waters, producing a peaceful and rather sombre effect. The composition is the most considerable to be found in any of the elder Holbein's works, and is well grouped and arranged. The influence of Martin Schongauer can be very clearly traced in it, and the unusual position in which the Virgin is holding the Child is directly derived from Schongauer's beautiful "Madonna in the Rose-Garden," which Holbein must have studied in the neighbouring city of Colmar.[1] There were also altar-panels by Schongauer in the Isenheim Monastery itself, where Holbein appears to have been working when he painted the "Fountain of Life." In addition to this direct influence, others, both Flemish and Italian, are to be traced in it, but well fused, so that the whole composition is unforced and natural, and contains passages of much beauty. There is delicacy and warmth in the flesh tints, and the sincerity of feeling which pervades all the principal figures is one of its chief charms. The rich architecture of the background shows good understanding and appreciation of the Italian models upon which it is based, and in all ways the picture indicates that when the elder Holbein put forth his greatest powers he was worthy of being ranked among the best German painters of the early sixteenth century.

Although he does not appear to have had many opportunities of exercising his skill as a portrait-painter, his very numerous studies in this branch of art show abilities of a very high order, and possess many of the qualities, though in a lesser degree, which his son afterwards developed to so high a pitch of perfection. Indeed, in these portrait-studies of men his art attains its greatest strength and finest accomplishment. Sixty-nine of his drawings of heads are preserved in the Imhoff Collection in the Berlin Museum. They are on the leaves of sketch-books, and were made between 1509 and 1516, in

[1] Glaser, p. 105.

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

Hans Holbein the Elder

National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon



silver-point and pencil, some of them strengthened with white and with red chalk. A smaller number of heads from the same series are in the Copenhagen Museum, and at Basel and Bamberg, while isolated examples are to be found in the print-rooms of more than one European museum. Some of the Basel drawings were made before 1508, and in the collection of M. Léon Bonnat, which contains several fine silver-points by the elder Hans, there is one of the Augsburg goldsmith, Jörig Seld, dated 1497.

These drawings, which at one time were all ascribed to his son, and are so attributed in the first edition of Dr. Woltmann's book, represent citizens of Augsburg in all classes of life, many of them, no doubt, personal friends of the painter, who, in a number of cases, has written their names on the sketches. There is no evidence to show that the majority of them were preliminary studies for portraits for which he had received commissions; they were done partly for his own amusement and practice, and partly to serve as models for figures in his sacred paintings. They form, nevertheless, a very valuable record of the Augsburg life of his day, and so may be compared, in the wideness of their range at least, with the more brilliant series of drawings by his son. In numerous instances the same sitter has been drawn two or three times; of Johannes Schrott [1] and Hans Griesher,[2] monks of St. Ulrich, there are no less than seven and six respectively. Among them there are portraits of the Emperor Maximilian,[3] on horseback, in helmet, and with sword, and of his grandson, afterwards Charles V,[4] with a falcon on his wrist, inscribed "herzog karl vo burgundy." As Charles became Duke of Burgundy in 1515, and King of Castile in 1516, the drawing must have been made in the former year. There are several portraits of members of the great Fugger family, among them Jacob Fugger,[5] the head of the clan; his nephews, Raimund [6] and Anton [7]; his cousin, Ulrich Fugger the Younger,[8] and his wife, Veronica Gassner [9]; and several more. Other leading Augsburg families are represented in heads of Gumprecht Rauner,[10] Hans Nell,[11] Hans Pfleger,[12] and Hans Herlins,[13] and members of the court circle by such men as Kunz von der Rosen,[14]

[1] W., 41, 127–31, 279. G., 104–10.
[2] W., 131–2, 226, 279–80. G., 109–14.
[3] W., 109. G., 133.
[4] W., 110. G., 134.
[5] W., 117–18, 224. G., 137-9.
[6] W., 119. G., 140.
[7] W., 120. G., 141.
[8] W., 121. G., 142.
[9] W., 122. G., 143.
[10] W., 149. G., 172.
[11] W., 148. G., 169.
[12] W., 143. G., 164.
[13] W., 141–2. G., 165–6.
[14] W., 111–12. G., 135–6.

the Emperor Maximilian's lifelong friend and adviser. Included among these drawings are representations of more than one of Holbein's fellow-workers in art, such as Hans Schwartz [1] the wood-carver, and Burkhart Engelberg,[2] stone-carver and architect. Representatives of more lowly pursuits are Gumpret Schwartz,[3] schoolmaster, and one Grün,[4] a tailor, and certain "merry fellows" of the artisan class. The heads of ladies are not very numerous, but one of them, the wife of the Guildmaster Schwartzensteiner,[5] a typical example of the "good wife" of Augsburg, has been drawn no less than three times. A less reputable personage among them is Anna, known as "the Lomentlin," [6] who was twice expelled from the town for serious misconduct, and returned in the end apparently repentant, afterwards posing as a saint, and professing to be able to live without meat or drink. One of the most important groups in this series of drawings represents the monks of St. Ulrich, Augsburg's famous monastery—Heinrich Grün,[7] Leonhard Wagner,[8] Conrad Merlin,[9] Johannes Schrott, Hans Griesher, and others. Finally, there are a few studies of heads of members of the artist's family, including his own likeness, that of his brother Sigmund,[10] and the double portraits of his two sons, which have been already mentioned.

There is a small finished portrait of a lady of Augsburg, whose Christian name only, Maria, is known, in the collection of Sir Frederick Cook, at Richmond, which is the sole example of portraiture by the elder Holbein in England; and, indeed, with the exception of the portrait of a man, dated 1513, in the Lanckoronski Collection in Vienna,[11] which is also attributed to him, it is very possibly the only specimen of such work by him in existence. This portrait is of particular interest, because it conflicts with the statement of Dr. Glaser, that he never painted an independent portrait.[12] It was formerly attributed to the younger Holbein, but most critics failed to see his hand in it; and, when exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1906, it was described as of the South German School, with a note recording that the names of Schaffner and Ambrosius Holbein had been tentatively suggested in connection with it. Dr. Friedländer,

[1] W., 153–4. G., 156–7. [2] W., 231. G., 154. [3] W., 34. G., 170.
[4] W., 145–6. G., 167–8. [5] W., 155–7. G., 209–11. [6] W., 159. G., 213.
[7] W., 133–4. G., 115–17. [8] W., 124–5, 225. G., 100–2. [9] W., 126. G., 103.
[10] W., 108. G., 151–2. Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xxxvi.
[11] Woltmann, 284. [12] Glaser, p. 133.

however, considered it to be a work of the younger Holbein in his early Basel period. In 1908 Dr. Carl Giehlow suggested that the older painter was its real author, and drew attention for the first time to the fact that a fine study for it exists in the British Museum (Pl. 5); and further evidence in favour of this attribution has been brought forward by Mr. Campbell Dodgson.[1]

The picture is on panel, 13¾ by 10½ inches. The sitter wears a white cap with embroidered margin of fleur-de-lis pattern. Her yellow bodice, trimmed at the edges with a broad band of black velvet, opens in front to show a white under-garment patterned in black and gold. The girdle is studded with gold ornaments. The hands are hidden, being pushed within the sleeves, as though for warmth. The background is plain blue, and on the back of the panel is painted "Maria" in an abbreviated form, evidently the sitter's Christian name. On the front of the old original frame is inscribed: "ALSO.WAS.ICH.VIR. WAR.IN.DEM. 34. IAR." (So was I in truth in my thirty-fourth year.)

The silver-point drawing in the British Museum is, says Mr. Dodgson, "a delicate piece of work, in perfect preservation, and so fresh and spontaneous that it must be regarded as a study from life, preparatory to the picture, and not as a copy from the latter. It is significant that only the main outlines of the costume are noted, and that ornamental details, which it would have taken a long time to draw, are reserved for the final execution of the portrait in oils; nothing of the kind is even suggested except the fleur-de-lis pattern on the cap. All the essential outlines of the figure itself, on the other hand, are drawn with a careful and expressive line, which notes the folds of the flesh beneath the chin more accurately than the creases of the sleeve at the elbow." This drawing, like the portrait itself, is neither signed nor dated, so that it may be suggested, by those who see in the finished work the hand of the younger Holbein, that the drawing also is the work of the son. There is, however, a second drawing of the same lady in the Berlin Museum,[2] one of the series of the elder Holbein's studies, in which she is represented in almost the same position, and wearing the same dress, though apparently several years older.[3]

[1] *Burlington Magazine*, October 1908, pp. 37–43.

[2] Berlin, 2558. Glaser, 216. Woltmann, 158.

[3] The portrait and both drawings reproduced by Mr. Dodgson in his article; and the portrait in the *Illustrated Catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition*, 1906, Pl. xxxi.

It does not seem to be a repetition of the earlier drawing, but a fresh portrait from life made after a considerable interval. The Berlin drawing is undoubtedly the work of the elder painter, while the one in the British Museum is closer to his style than to that of his son at the period in question, when the latter was still in his teens, as shown in such early Basel drawings as the studies of Meyer and his wife. The new attribution, therefore, appears to be the correct one, the evidence in favour of the elder Holbein being, if not conclusive, at least very strong.

Little is known of the last eight years of his life. The "Fountain of Life" is the only picture painted by him during that period which has survived.[1] It is supposed that he never returned to Augsburg, but died in Isenheim; but that he spent the whole period there seems unlikely. Isenheim is close to Basel, and it is not impossible that his last days were passed under the roof of his son Hans in the latter city. A letter, dated 4th July 1526, and addressed to the Vicar of the Order of St. Anthony in Isenheim by the burgomaster of Basel, Heinrich Meltinger, bears out this supposition.[2] It was written on behalf of Hans Holbein the Younger, and by means of it he made a final attempt to obtain possession of, or compensation for, his father's painting materials, which the latter had left behind him, or which had been detained for some purpose by the monastery authorities. From this letter it appears, also, that the son had made more than one previous attempt, during his father's lifetime, and at the elder painter's request, to get the goods returned; from which it is to be inferred that for some considerable time prior to his death Hans Holbein the Elder had left Isenheim. In 1521, as already pointed out, he was sued by Hans Kämlin for a small debt, but this does not necessarily indicate that the painter himself was in Augsburg at the time. His death took place in 1524, as is proved by an entry in the Handwerksbuch of the Augsburg Painters' Guild of that year, in which "Hannss Holbain maller" is noted as deceased; but this again does not prove that his actual death occurred in that city.

[1] In May of the present year (1913) the "Fountain of Life" picture was removed from the Palacio das Necessidades to the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon.

[2] See page 254.

STUDY FOR THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY OF AUGSBURG

Silver-point drawing

Hans Holbein the Elder

British Museum



CHAPTER II

YOUTHFUL DAYS IN AUGSBURG

Birth of Hans Holbein the Younger—Forgeries of dates on early pictures attributed to him—Various portraits bearing on the question of the year of his birth—His early life in Augsburg—The family house on the Vorderer Lech—Early training in his father's studio—Hans Burgkmair—Augsburg and the decorative arts.



O absolutely conclusive proof has yet been discovered of the exact date of the birth of Hans Holbein the Younger. For years the question was complicated by more than one forgery of dates and signatures on certain pictures in Augsburg, and by spurious amplifications made in the modern copies taken from certain entries in the annals of the convent of St. Catherine. Owing to these forgeries, Dr. Woltmann, in the first edition of his book,[1] advanced the opinion that Holbein was born in 1495 ; but before the publication of the first volume of the second edition of his work, in 1874, these inscriptions and entries had been proved to be falsifications, and he then altered the date to 1497,[2] and this is now generally accepted as correct. Equal doubt existed at one time as to the place of his birth. Among earlier writers, Carel van Mander (1604) and Patin (1676) stated that he was born in Basel, while Matthis Quad gave his birthplace as Grünstadt in the Palatinate. Sandrart (1675) was the first biographer to name Augsburg, which modern research has shown to be correct. The forgeries, no doubt, were the result of the discovery that Holbein was not a Swiss, as had been usually supposed, and were intended to supply convincing evidence that he was of German origin, and a citizen of Augsburg, and also to furnish proof of the precocity of his youthful genius.

The chief forgery was an inscription on a picture in the Augsburg Gallery (Nos. 74–77), dated 1512, which until 1845 had always been rightly regarded as the work of the elder Holbein. This picture is

[1] Published in 1868.

[2] Woltmann, i. p. 101.

one of the four panels which originally formed the inner and outer sides of the two shutters of an altar-piece or shrine painted for the convent of St. Catherine.[1] The two inner panels represent the Martyrdom of St. Catherine [2] and the Legend of St. Ulrich, the patron saint of Augsburg; the outer ones the Crucifixion of St. Peter, and the Virgin and St. Anne teaching the Infant Christ to walk. On the panel representing St. Catherine the date 1512 occurs on a votive tablet containing a Latin prayer to the saint, while on the old original frame the name of the painter, "Hans Holbain," the two last letters of the surname now defaced, stands in gold letters.[3] It was upon the panel representing the Virgin and St. Anne with the Infant Christ [4] that the false inscription was placed. In this picture Mary and her Mother are seated, each holding a hand of the youthful Saviour, who stands between them on the bench making his first attempts to walk. Three small angels hold up a curtain behind them, and at the top of the panel is a band of rich Renaissance ornamentation, with two cupids blowing horns.[5] St. Anne holds an open book on her lap with her left hand; and when, in 1854, the panel was separated from its obverse side and cleaned and restored, a Latin inscription upon this book came to light, parts of which were hidden by the hand of the saint. This inscription stated that the picture had been painted "by order of the venerable and most pious mother Veronica Welser—Hans Holbain, of Augsburg, at the age of 17." [6] Before this Dr. Waagen [7] and several other critics had attributed this altar-piece to the younger Holbein because of supposed differences in style between it and the greater number of the authenticated works by the father. The newly-discovered inscription, which was accepted as genuine by Dr. Woltmann and most German writers, was considered to afford final proof of the truth of Waagen's contention, though a few, among them Herman Grimm, refused to credit it. It was not until after the death of A. Eigner, the keeper of the Augsburg Gallery, and the

[1] Woltmann, 14–17. [2] Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xxix. [3] Glaser, p. 85.

[4] Reproduced by Davies, p. 16.

[5] This band of ornament, which is different in each panel, recalls the very similar scroll work by the younger Hans used in the upper part of the organ shutters at one time in the cathedral church of Basel.

[6] "IVSSV. VENER. PIENTQVE MATRIS VERONI . . W . . . E. H. HOLBAIN IN AVG. ÆT. SVÆ XVII." Wornum, p. 88. Woltmann, ii. p. 4.

[7] *Kunstwerke und Künstler in Deutschland*, 1845.

originator of the falsification, in November 1870, that it was possible to apply a practical test to it, with the result that it proved to be a modern forgery. Upon the application of turpentine the whole of the inscription disappeared, and traces of a much earlier and badly-defaced one were found beneath it. The discovery of its fictitious nature led to further investigation, and the final abandonment of the date 1495 as the year of the painter's birth, while the picture is now rightly restored to the older artist who painted it.

Far more reliable proof as to the correct date of Holbein's birth is afforded by the fine silver-point drawing by the elder painter, in the Berlin Museum, of the heads of his two sons (Pl. 6).[1] Between the heads is written "Holbain," and over that of the younger boy on the right the word "Hanns," with the age "14" above the name. Over the head of the elder boy on the left the shortened name "Prosy" is still legible. Probably the first syllable, "Am," has become obliterated in course of time, or it may be that the father merely set down his nickname, "Prosy."[2] The age of Ambrosius, which must also have been added, is now entirely effaced. At the top of the sheet is placed the date, which to-day is barely legible. Dr. Woltmann read it as "1511," which would give the birth-year of Hans as 1497, and this reading is now generally accepted. The same writer imagined that he could trace the figure "5" above the head of Ambrosius, which would make his age fifteen, and thus one year older than his brother. In the drawing itself, however, he appears to be at least two or three years the senior. Dr. Willy Hes, in his recently-published book on Ambrosius Holbein, states that this now almost obliterated age-figure is "17," and this is probably correct.[3] Both heads are full of character. The younger boy, with round face, and straight hair falling on his forehead and covering his ears, though not a child of much personal beauty, has a pleasant, thoughtful expression. The forehead is a fine one, projecting over the eyes, and showing, according to phrenologists, a strongly-developed power of imagination, while the mouth is large and determined. Ambrosius has more mobile features, and a mass of curling hair. This drawing, which at one time was attributed to the younger Hans, is one of the

[1] Already mentioned, see p. 11. Glaser, 153. Woltmann, 107. [2] See page 5.

[3] See Hes, p. 12, and footnote giving Woltmann's various surmises as to the date and figures inscribed on the drawing.

most masterly in the Berlin series, and shows how largely the son's great gift of lifelike portraiture was inherited from his father.

Dr. Hes also publishes a second drawing by the elder Holbein from the Berlin collection,[1] which, as he was the first to point out, undoubtedly represents the two boys at an earlier age. This silver-point drawing, hitherto known merely as "Portraits of two Children," and bearing the inscription "Thomasins Sohn und Tochter" in a later hand, represents the two boys in profile, facing one another. It is not of such fine quality as the drawing of 1511, but the likeness to Ambrosius and Hans is unmistakable. In this earlier study Dr. Hes considers the age of the boys to be eight and five respectively. The further researches of the same writer have resulted in his discovery of a third likeness of the elder son from his father's pencil, a beautiful drawing of a curly-haired lad with looks cast downwards. It is among the silver-point drawings of Hans Holbein the Elder in the Basel collection,[2] and seems to be connected with two other works by the Augsburg master, both also at Basel, for which, perhaps, it may have served as a preliminary study. One is an Indian-ink study for a "Death of Mary," and the other a large oil-painting of the same subject (No. 301). In both the features of the youthful St. John, who bends over the Virgin with palm-branch and long candle in either hand, are evidently those of Ambrosius. This drawing[3] is dated 1508 on a slate hanging at the head of the bed, so that the "St. John" represents the boy at the age of about fourteen. A still more youthful figure, with long hair, stands behind the wooden head of the bed, with clasped hands, gazing down at the Virgin. It may be suggested, though Dr. Hes does not call attention to it, that in this figure we have a third likeness of the younger Hans. The resemblance to the heads in the two drawings is not as close as in the case of Ambrosius, but is sufficiently so to permit the conjecture that the father intended to introduce both his boys into the picture to be painted from this study. The connection between these drawings and the picture at Basel is not, however, very clear. In the oil painting[4]

[1] Woltmann, 160. Glaser, 218. Reproduced by Woltmann, *H. H. des Ä. Silberstiftzeichnungen*, &c., Pl. lxiv.; Hes, Pl. i.

[2] Woltmann, 43. Glaser, 203. Reproduced by His in his publication of the elder Holbein's drawings, Pl. lxxiv.; Hes, Pl. iii.

[3] Woltmann, 58. Glaser, 265. Reproduced by His, Pl. lvii.; Hes, Pl. iv.

[4] Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xiii.; Hes, Pl. v.

AMBROSIUS AND HANS HOLBEIN

1511

Silver-point drawing

Hans Holbein the Elder

Royal Print Room, Berlin



Mary is enthroned, the arrangement is entirely different, and many more figures are introduced; but the figure and face of the St. John are the same as in the Indian-ink drawing, though seen from the opposite side. According to the Basel catalogue, however, this picture was painted in 1501, and it does not appear very probable that the painter would have used a boy of seven as his model for the Saint. Behind St. John appears the curly head of a young man looking down; and here again, though possibly only in the imagination of the present writer, there is a faint resemblance to Hans the Younger. But this cannot be so if the picture was painted in 1501, when Hans was only four. The same figure of St. John occurs also in the "Death of Mary,"[1] on one of the panels of the Kaisheimer altar-piece at Munich. We have thus, in these drawings, together with the "Basilica of St. Paul" picture of 1504, portraits of Ambrosius Holbein at the ages of eight, ten, fourteen, and seventeen respectively, and of Hans when five, seven, and fourteen,[2] and also, if the likeness in the Indian-ink drawing of 1508 be allowed, at the age of eleven as well.

Further evidence as to his birth-date is afforded by two engravings, by Vorsterman and Hollar respectively, and several miniatures of Holbein by himself, some of the latter being only early copies, all of which are dated 1543, and give the age as forty-five. Vorsterman's print, which is $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, shows no date on the background, but round the outside is engraved "Ioannes Holbenius Pictor Regis Magnæ Britanniæ Sui Cæculi Celeberrimus Anno 1543 Ætat: 45." Hollar's etching is also circular. There is no lettering round the rim, but across the background is inscribed: "HH. Æ. 45—Anº 1543." Below is the legend —"Vera Effigies Johannis Holbeinii Basiliensis Pictoris et Deliniatoris rarissimi. Ipse Holbeinius pinxit, Wenceslaus Hollar aqua forti æri insculpsit. Ex Collec: Arundel: 1647."[3] The original paintings from which these two engravings were taken have not been discovered, but they were, no doubt, two small roundels in oils.[4] In Carel van Mander's time two such portraits were in existence. He says, when speaking of Holbein's works then in Amsterdam: "At the

[1] Reproduced by Glaser, Pl. xvii. [2] See Hes, p. 15. [3] Parthey, No. 1418.
[4] Or possibly from such miniatures as those in the Duke of Buccleuch's collection. See vol. ii. pp. 230–1.

house of Jacques Razet, the fine arts amateur, I saw Holbein's portrait, painted by himself very prettily and neatly, in miniature, with a small margin round it; and in the possession of Bartholomäus Ferreris, I saw a second, about the size of the palm of my hand, excellently and neatly executed in flesh tints." [1] Sandrart, who was in Amsterdam between 1639 and 1645, gave to the collector Le Blond a small round portrait of Holbein, and this is probably identical with the one which Van Mander saw in the possession of Razet. From Le Blond, who acted as agent for the Earl, it may well have passed into the Arundel Collection before 1647, in which year Hollar etched it. Vorsterman's engraving is not dated, but it is evidently taken from the same or an almost similar original, and this artist engraved other pictures in the Arundel collection. According to Walpole, the picture in the Earl's possession was dated. He says, quoting from one of the pocket-books of Richard Symonds:—"In the Arundelian collection was a head of Holbein, in oil, by himself, most sweet, dated 1543." [2] The various miniatures of the painter, the greater number of which are merely good and almost contemporary copies, described in a later chapter,[3] have all, with one possible exception, the same date, 1543, upon them, and, like the engravings, represent the artist with a beard, wearing a black skull-cap, and, in those which show the hands, in the act of painting. The exception is the fine miniature in the Salting Collection, which is inscribed "ETATIS SVÆ 35," but is without date. It is almost certain, however, that this miniature does not represent the painter.[4]

The fact that the inscriptions on these various engravings and miniatures agree as to the date and the age of the painter does not necessarily prove that such date and age were placed by the artist himself upon the original painting on which most of them are based; but the probability is that such was the case, and that Holbein, therefore, was forty-five years old in 1543. Unless, however, more definite evidence is forthcoming in the future, the question must remain

[1] Woltmann, i. 477. Dr. Paul Ganz suggests that one of these portraits may have been the small roundel belonging to Lord Spencer, traditionally known as a portrait of Holbein, but considered by him to represent the jeweller, Hans of Antwerp. See Ganz, *Holbein* (Klassiker der Kunst), p. 253. This large miniature is described more fully in vol. ii. pp. 14-15.

[2] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, ed. Wornum, 1888, i. p. 93.

[3] See vol. ii. pp. 230-1.

[4] This small roundel is now considered to be a portrait of Hans of Antwerp. See vol. ii. p. 14.

undecided, though it is practically certain that his birth took place either in 1497 or 1498.

Nothing is known of Holbein's early life in Augsburg, where he spent the greater part of his first seventeen years. It is not very likely that his father took his family with him upon his painting expeditions to Ulm, Frankfurt, and elsewhere, although he became a burgher of the first-named place for a time. It was the custom at that period for a painter to leave wife and children at home while he visited other centres in search of work or to carry out commissions. The house in which the young Hans is supposed to have been born is still standing in Augsburg, and bears a recording tablet on its front. It is in the Vorderer Lech, No. 496A, one of the quieter streets of the city to-day. It is thus described by Mr. Davies: "The Vorderer Lech obtains its name from the fact that a narrow channel of the Lech runs clear and green down one side of the street, separating the roadway from the houses on the north side. Access is gained to these houses in most instances by a wooden bridge or gangway which leads the visitor under an archway in the house itself. The house of the Holbeins, one of those little whitewashed buildings with the comfortable red-tiled roofs which are so plentiful in the city, has nothing to distinguish it beyond the tablet aforesaid. You pass under the arch, and find on either side the doors (still retaining their ancient hinges) and the open staircase which leads to the separate tenements into which the house is now divided. Ascending the staircase to the right, one finds the little room wherein tradition has it that our Hans Holbein was born, the little kitchen over which his mother presided, and the room which is traditionally regarded as the painting room of Hans Holbein the elder. It looks pleasantly out over enclosed gardens and picturesque roofs up towards the statelier buildings of the Maximilianstrasse. The house is not luxurious, but may well have been a house of no small comfort in the days when the Holbeins held it." [1]

It is impossible to point to any work of this period which can be accepted without question as from the hand of the younger Holbein alone. Both he and his brother Ambrosius received a very thorough training in their father's workshop, and for the last few years before their departure for Basel they must have taken an active though minor share in the completion of the various commissions

[1] Davies, p. 14.

which fell to the elder painter. Many attempts have been made to separate the work of the father from that of his sons in such pictures as the "St. Catherine" altar-piece panels of 1512, already described, and the more famous "St. Sebastian" altar-piece in Munich; but the critics have never been able to come to any settled agreement as to the particular parts of these pictures, if any, which were the actual work of the younger Hans. It is only possible to say with some certainty that he must have been employed by his father on the less important portions of his altar-pieces, and that such work would be carried out under the personal direction of the elder painter, who alone was responsible for the general design and composition, and the arrangement of the colour-scheme, if not for the actual painting of the figures and the chief passages of the pictures. It is not possible to allow, as some writers have done, that such figures as the St. Elizabeth and St. Barbara on the shutters of the Munich "St. Sebastian" altar-piece were conceived and carried out by the younger Holbein independently of his father, although he may have shared to some small extent in the actual painting of the panels. They display a more advanced technique, and an art in all ways more matured, than is to be found in the earliest independent work of Holbein's first Basel period.

In his father's studio Holbein obtained a very complete grounding in all the technical processes of his art, and was encouraged to develop that extraordinary gift for portraiture which he had largely inherited. The family seems to have been so frequently hard-pressed for money that the two boys would be obliged, at as early an age as possible, to begin to work seriously for a living, and in this way would gain much useful practical knowledge and facility in the handling of brush and pencil. In other respects Holbein's art was apparently more strongly influenced by the example of Hans Burgkmair, who was some twenty-five years his senior, than by that of his own father, and more particularly in his ready assimilation of the newer methods and aspirations springing from the Italian Renaissance, which afterwards became so perfectly blended in his painting with those older forms and conceptions of the Germanic school of the fifteenth century, in which he was first trained in the elder Holbein's workshop. Burgkmair returned from Italy about 1508, full of enthusiasm for the new movement, and his example must have acted as an inspiration

to Holbein's budding genius. Not only in his pictures and wall-paintings, but in his remarkable designs for wood-cuts for the two great works in his own honour projected by the Emperor Maximilian —the "Weisskunig," and the "Triumphal Procession"—Burgkmair exercised an undoubted influence over his younger contemporary. A year or two later in Basel Holbein's art appears to have been affected to some extent, though indirectly, by that of Hans Baldung Grien and Matthias Grünewald, through the medium of some painter whose name so far has not been traced.[1] Other causes, too, were at work in moulding him for his future career. The city of Augsburg was exceptionally well fitted for providing incentives to a young artist to develop his powers in many directions. The practice of decorating the more important buildings of the city and the mansions of its merchant-princes with wall-paintings both within and without provided work for numerous artists, and in this way, no doubt, Holbein first began to practise a form of art which a few years later he was to carry to so high a pitch of excellence in Lucerne and Basel. Numerous printers, too, were settled in the city, who provided employment for many wood-engravers and designers of book illustrations and ornamentation—the latter a form of art in which Holbein was very busily engaged during the first ten years of his residence in Switzerland. His skill, too, in making designs for workers in gold and silver, in enamels and painted glass, must have received its first encouragement in Augsburg, which was noted for its craftsmen. Every branch of handicraft, indeed, was practised there. Its armourers, headed by the great Kolman family, were celebrated throughout Europe, while the Augsburg goldsmiths were equally famous for the artistic excellence and fine workmanship of their productions. Among such masters in their various arts the youthful Holbein moved, and it must have been from personal intercourse with them that he gained his first knowledge of design, and how it should be rightfully applied to the service of the several decorative arts, and how best modified to suit the nature of the materials used in each particular handicraft; and that he made the most of his opportunities is proved by the fact that when, a few years later, he started upon an independent career in Basel, the first works he produced show him to have been even at that early age an almost complete master of decorative design.

[1] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to i. 10.

CHAPTER III

FIRST YEARS IN SWITZERLAND

Departure of Hans and Ambrosius from Basel—The "Virgin and Child" of 1514—The painted Table at Zürich—Their arrival in Basel—Heads of the Virgin and St. John—The "Cross-Bearing" at Karlsruhe—The five scenes from "Christ's Passion" at Basel—Work for the Basel printers—Holbein's first title-page—The marginal drawings to Erasmus' "Praise of Folly"—The share of Ambrosius in these illustrations—The legend of the painter's intemperance—The Schoolmaster's Sign-Board—Double portrait of Jakob Meyer and his wife—The "Adam and Eve."



HE fortunes of the Holbein family, never very brilliant, having become still more precarious, if existing records are to be believed, the two sons, now approaching manhood, resolved to seek employment farther afield. Possibly in 1513, but more probably in the spring of 1514, they turned their backs on Augsburg and set out for Switzerland. Whether Basel was their objective from the beginning or whether they arrived there more or less by chance, in the course of their wander-year, and finding work plentiful, resolved to make it their headquarters, there is no actual proof to show; but their uncle, Sigmund, had been settled in Switzerland for some years,[1] and had established himself in good practice in Berne, and this fact may have had something to do with the resolve of the younger Holbeins to turn their faces in that direction. The discovery of a little picture of the "Virgin and Child," dated 1514, in a small village near Constance, which is attributed to Hans, affords some evidence that their departure from Augsburg took place in that year; that they had reached Basel some time in the spring or early summer of 1515 is proved by the existence of more than one authentic work by the younger brother bearing that date. Not long afterwards the father himself left Augsburg for Isenheim, near Gebweiler, in Alsace, at no great distance from Basel, and, so far as is known, never returned to his native city, so that the old home was finally broken up.

[1] His name does not appear in the Augsburg rate-books after 1509, and after 1512, the date on one of his brother's portrait-studies of him, no further trace of him is to be found in his native city.

The small picture of the "Virgin and Child" (Pl. 7) was discovered in the village of Rickenbach, near Constance, by Herr Anton Seder, and on the sale of his collection in 1876 it was acquired for the Basel Gallery (No. 302).[1] It came originally from the Maria Wallfahrts (Pilgrimages) Church of Rickenbach. On the background of the panel, on either side of the Virgin's head, are two coats of arms, the one on the left being that of the Von Botzheim family, and that on the right of the family of Ycher von Beringen. The picture, therefore, is supposed to have been ordered by Johann von Botzheim, canon of Constance, son of Michael von Botzheim and Anna Ycher von Beringen.

The Virgin is shown to the knees, a seated figure, holding the Child in her lap, upon whom she gazes with downcast eyes. She clasps him to her with her left hand, the right hand being placed under his chin. Her white dress of soft material is arranged in a multiplicity of small folds, each carefully drawn, and is decorated with a band of gold embroidery; the wide flowing sleeves are drawn in above and below the elbow with similar bands, and resemble the sleeves in the "St. Barbara" of the "St. Sebastian" altar-piece. The lower part of the dress is a very dark blue, almost black. She wears a golden crown, and her fair hair falls upon her shoulders, as in the famous Darmstadt "Madonna." The Child lies quietly in her arms, a somewhat sad expression on his face, with his small toes curled up, both feet and hands being admirably drawn. The background is a deep red, and over the Virgin's head hangs a festoon of laurel leaves, suspended from the painted framework which surrounds the group. This framework represents white stone pillars, with panels of black marble decorated with Renaissance ornamentation, and a number of small naked putti, three on either side and seven on the top. Some of these little winged angels salute the Virgin with trumpets, others carry the instruments of Christ's Passion, and four of them hold small tablets for inscriptions. These delightfully natural little figures are painted in an ivory tone and stand out well against the dark background. The work is immature, but displays a very tender, sympathetic feeling, and possesses very considerable attractions. The colour scheme, in which few tints are employed, is delicate and harmonious, and indicates that the artist already possessed a true sense

[1] Reproduced by Davies, p. 33; Knackfuss, fig. 1; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 3.

of its possibilities. The type of the Virgin resembles that employed by the elder Holbein in such pictures as the "Fountain of Life." The natural affection of mother for child is well expressed, both in the downcast face and in the drawing of the hands with which she holds the little one close to her.

On the plinth at the base of the picture is inscribed, in Roman lettering: "Que virgo peperit virgoque permanet lactavit propriis uberibus deum portantemque gerebat ulnis prona trementibus. M.D.XIIII." It is regarded as the earliest authentic work of the younger Hans, but neither his signature nor his initials are now clearly distinguishable upon it, and its authorship is not absolutely certain. The four small tablets in the hands of the putti at one time held inscriptions. No traces of them remain on the two on the right, but portions of those on the left are still visible. On the upper one there appears to be part of a Latin sentence and the remains of a date "151–." On the right-hand side of the lower one can still be deciphered some letters of a three-lined inscription, in the top line "R.A.," in the middle one "C.A." (Civis Augustanus), and in the bottom one the painter's monogram. To the writer this latter appears to resemble more closely that of Ambrosius, "AH," rather than that of Hans, "HH." If this supposition be correct, it would indicate that the elder brother was the author of the picture, or, at least, that he had a share in the painting of it. In style it resembles almost as closely the few known works by Ambrosius as the earlier Basel works of Hans; indeed, in some ways, it approaches more nearly to the elder brother's art, as seen in his drawings. In these there is a slight hesitancy and lack of decision in the touch which is not met with in the younger Holbein's work of the same period. The tenderness of feeling displayed in the picture is also to be found in such drawings by Ambrosius as the head of a young girl inscribed "Anne," in the Basel Gallery, while the putti have much in common with those which bear the shields above the heads of his two charming portraits of unknown boys, also at Basel. These putti, however, have a still greater likeness to those so frequently used by his brother Hans, as can be seen very plainly in the first title-page designed by him a year or two later; indeed, the whole framework of the picture recalls his handiwork. It may be suggested, therefore, that the Rickenbach "Madonna" was painted, in part at least, by Ambrosius. The two youths appear

VIRGIN AND CHILD

1514

Basel Gallery


QVE·VIRG·PEPERIT·VIRG·Q·PERMANET·LACTAVIT·PROPRIIS·VBERIBVS·CIEV·
PORTANTEMQ·GEREBAT·VENIS·PRONA·TREMENTIBVS·M·D·XIII·

to have travelled together—though there is no absolute proof of this—and it might be expected that any small commissions picked up on the way would be given to the elder brother, who, again, may have been assisted in carrying them out by his younger companion. Dr. Ganz points out the close resemblances between this picture and a silver-point drawing at Basel attributed to the two brothers.

A work of a very different kind, the Painted Table at Zürich,[1] has been regarded by some writers as the result of a commission received by Hans Holbein during a halt in that town on his journey to Basel. This, however, was not the case. It must have been painted after he had settled in the latter place, for it was ordered on the occasion of the marriage of Hans Baer, a citizen of Basel, with Barbara Brunner on the 24th June, 1515, either by Baer himself or by some friend of his as a wedding present, and the coats of arms of the two families are represented on it. Shortly afterwards the bridegroom left Basel for the Italian wars, marching as standard-bearer with one of the mercenary troops, and was killed at the battle of Marignano on the 14th of September in the same year.

This large table-top is of wood, and oblong in shape, with a slab of slate inserted in the centre. This broad wooden border or framework is painted with hunting, fishing, jousting, and other outdoor scenes. One of the longer sides is occupied with a number of mounted knights with long lances engaged in a tournament, attended by their squires and servants. The action is very spirited, and several of the individual figures are finely conceived. The corresponding side is devoted to hunting scenes, including the chase of the stag, the wild boar, the hare, and the bear. The last-named animal is represented in the act of overturning a number of bee-hives. The decoration of one of the end borders shows the banks of a river with a number of men and women engaged in fishing, using both the rod and nets of great variety. In the meadow at the back a table is spread for a meal, and two women are cooking at a fire. On the other end is depicted a lady and gentleman out hawking, with the branches of the surrounding trees crowded with birds of many kinds, and rabbits playing on the grass, and, on the left, some game is shown in progress, in which young men are capturing girls in nets. The slate slab in the middle contains two principal subjects. One of them represents

[1] Woltmann, 359.

the old legend of "St. Nobody," the unfortunate mythical personage usually accused of being the author of all breakages and accidents in German households, and incapable of defending himself from such false accusations, and, for this reason, represented by Holbein with a padlocked mouth, and surrounded by broken crockery and other objects of daily use. A comic poem on "Nobody," by Ulrich von Hutten, published in Basel at about the time the table was painted, suggested this subject, and some lines from it are inscribed on a ribbon-scroll above the dejected saint. The second subject is also humorous, and shows a pedlar sleeping by the roadside, quite unconscious of a troop of monkeys who have plundered his pack. Over the rest of the surface a number of small scattered objects have been painted, as though left there by the owner. These formed a part of the joke, and were painted with a realism intended to deceive, and with the expectation that the spectator would attempt to pick them up. Among them are a pair of spectacles, a seal, a quill-pen, and penknife, scissors, a carnation, and a folded letter with a seal, round the margin of which part of the painter's signature, "HANS HO," can still be deciphered, though the coat of arms itself is not that of the Holbein family. A circle in the centre of the table contains the armorial bearings of Hans Baer and his wife.

In the year 1633 the table was presented to the State Library of Zürich, where it was held in high estimation throughout the seventeenth century. Both Sandrart and Patin saw it there. The former describes it at some length. "In particular," he says, "there is a large table which is worthy of inspection, entirely painted by our Hans Holbein the younger, on which, in artistic oil colours, he has represented the so-called Saint (Nobody) sitting sadly on a broken tub, his mouth fastened up with a great lock. Around him torn old books are lying, earthen and metal vessels, glass pans, dishes, and various other utensils, but all broken and destroyed. An open letter, on which Holbein's name stands, is so naturally represented, that many people have seized it by mistake, thinking it is a real one. The rest of this table is ornamented with various hunting scenes and foliage." Patin speaks of it as "a square table, about five spans broad, on which are depicted dancing, fishing, hunting, fish-spearing, represented for the most part playfully." In spite of this praise, in

course of time it became neglected, and finally disappeared, and was not heard of again until 1871, when it was discovered by Professor Salomon Vögelin, buried under thick dust and a mass of old papers, and in a very damaged condition.[1] It now forms one of the chief treasures of the Zürich Library, but it has been so seriously injured by the neglect and ill-usage to which it was subjected for so long a time, that even after more than one careful attempt at restoration, much of Holbein's original and entertaining work has permanently disappeared.

Although the exact date of the arrival of the two brothers in Basel is not known, there is evidence to show that they were busily at work there throughout the year 1515. Possibly it may have been their original intention to make a halt in that city of only some months' duration; but they found it so profitable a field for their labours that they determined to remain there permanently. Basel, with its famous University, was at that time the home and refuge of many of the ablest thinkers and writers of the day, and it opened its gates freely to all whose advanced opinions made Germany and other parts of Europe undesirable as places of residence. Its many printing-presses were already celebrated, and the printers and publishers found constant employment both for learned scholars who edited for them new editions of the classics and the fathers of the Church, and for a large body of draughtsmen, designers, and wood-cutters who were engaged in illustrating their publications with portraits, pictures, title-pages, and innumerable initial letters and other ornaments. This well-paid and regular work which the city offered to all artists of ability was, no doubt, the real cause which induced the two brothers to become citizens of Basel.

Among the earliest works produced there by Hans were two small heads of saints now in the Basel Gallery (Nos. 308, 309), apparently intended to represent the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist. (Pl. 8).[2] The Virgin is wearing a crown, and her long straight hair falls upon her shoulders, as in the Rickenbach "Virgin and Child" of the previous year. The type of face, too, is the same as in that picture, and

[1] S. Vögelin, "Ein wiedergefundenes Meisterwerk Holbeins," in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1871 (Nos. 236–7, 244, 248), and *Der Holbein-tisch auf der Stadtbibliothek in Zürich*, Wien, 1878. Reproduced as a whole and in detail, together with a reconstruction, by Ganz in *Holbein* (*K. der K.*) pp. 6–9.

[2] Woltmann, 7, 8. Reproduced by Knackfuss, figs. 2, 3; Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 19, 20.

is seen again in the "Adam and Eve" picture of 1517. St. John is represented as a beardless young man with curly hair, and here again the head closely resembles that of the man in the "Adam and Eve." Each has a large golden nimbus, which stands out against a plain pale-blue background. These small panels are pleasant in colour, and carefully painted, but otherwise afford few indications of the artist's future greatness. They formed part of the Amerbach collection, and in the inventory are described as the young Holbein's first works. ("Item einer heiligen iungen und iungfrawen köpflin mit patenen vf holz mit ölfarb klein H. Holbein erste arbeit.")

The earliest work of Hans which is both signed and dated is the small panel in the Karlsruhe Gallery (No. 64), representing "Christ Bearing the Cross," a composition crowded with small figures.[1] In the centre Christ has fallen to his knees under the weight of the Cross, and is urged forward by the brutal soldiery, clad in the costume of the mercenary landsknechte of Holbein's day. On the right stands St. Veronica holding the handkerchief, and behind her the mounted Centurion, with a small dog running by his horse's feet, both animals very inadequately rendered. On the left is a group consisting of the weeping Virgin, St. John, Simon the Cyrenean, who is helping to raise the Cross, and Joseph of Arimathea. Behind the chief characters is a crowd of armed men and spectators issuing from the gate of a town, and in the background a hilly landscape with distant buildings. It is signed "H.H. 1515," and was at one time attributed to the elder Holbein, and is still considered to be from his hand by some writers. It is so described in the first volume of the second edition of Woltmann's book, but in the second volume he reverses his opinion, and modern criticism is mainly in agreement with this. Though in many ways a crude performance, it appears to be an undoubted work of the younger painter, conceived under the influence of his father. The figure of the stumbling Christ, the action of Simon, and of the soldiers striking at Christ are all reminiscent both of the "Cross-bearing" panel in the "Passion" series by the elder Holbein in the gallery of Prince Carl von Fürstenberg at Donaueschingen, (Nos. 43–54),[2] and of the similar subject in the Vetter votive picture

[1] Woltmann, 168. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 4; and in outline by Reinach, *Répertoire de Peintures*, i. p. 401 (as by H. H. the Elder).

[2] Reproduced by Reinach, *Répertoire*, i. p. 4.

THE VIRGIN MARY

ST. JOHN

BASEL GALLERY





of the year 1499 in the Augsburg Gallery (No. 61). Upon the back of the Karlsruhe picture are the badly-damaged remains of a second "Passion" subject, the "Crowning with Thorns," also by the younger Hans, first published by Dr. Paul Ganz in his recent book, which also has much in common with the same two works by the elder Holbein.[1] The work, again, is closely akin to the five scenes from "Christ's Passion" in the Basel Gallery (Nos. 303–307), which are certainly among the very earliest productions of the younger Hans. Two of these, "The Last Supper" and "The Scourging of Christ," belonged to Bonifacius Amerbach, and are the best of the set, the remaining three having been acquired in 1836 at a sale in Basel. They are painted on canvas, instead of on panel, an unusual method for pictures of any value in those days, and for this reason it is supposed that they were ordered for some special purpose, such as the decoration of a church during Holy Week, after which they would be rolled up and put away until wanted again in the following year. The hasty execution which they betray possibly arises from the same cause. They may have been wanted in a hurry, and the pay for them was perhaps too small to allow of careful, elaborate work, which, indeed, would not be necessary, considering the temporary purpose for which they were intended. They have also been taken as affording indications that the young painters did not immediately on their arrival set up an independent workshop of their own, but entered for a period the service of some Basel artist as journeymen painters for a weekly wage.

The composition of these "Passion" pictures, it is urged, is too elaborate to be the unaided invention of the two young men, and it is therefore assumed that the designs were provided by some other painter, and that Hans and Ambrosius carried them out under his instructions. The name of Hans Herbster, whose portrait by the elder brother[2] is now in the Basel Gallery (No. 293) has been suggested in this connection. On the other hand, although it is not easy at the first glance to recognise the workmanship of Hans in these coarsely-painted pictures, it is equally difficult to point to any one among the older painters then in Basel who, judged by existing

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 5. Wrongly described in Reinach, *Répertoire*, as "The Flagellation."

[2] Dr. Willy Hes considers this portrait to be by Herbster himself. See p. 60.

works, was capable of producing compositions of this importance; in any case, the colour scheme was probably Holbein's own, as well as the vigorous expression given to the heads, which, however, in some of the subjects is exaggerated to the verge of caricature. The grotesquely ugly and brutal executioners in "The Scourging" have much in common with such works of Hans Holbein the Elder as the Passion scenes at Donaueschingen, and it may very well be that these five pictures were the unaided productions of Hans and his brother, based upon the knowledge of similar paintings by their father, in the execution of which they had in all probability given him assistance, and that they did not renew their prentice days in Herbster's or any other workshop, but started as independent painters from the first.

In the "Last Supper" (No. 303) (Pl. 9),[1] the meal is laid on two tables placed at right angles, with Christ sitting at the angle, and he is represented in the act of passing the bread across the table to Judas, who, dressed in yellow, is half rising from his seat. The supper takes place in an open loggia or courtyard, the background being filled with archways and openings through which the deep blue sky is seen. In the distance on the right is a representation of the Washing of Peter's feet. In the night scene on the Mount of Olives (No 304),[2] the kneeling Christ lifts up his arms with a passionate movement. The angel, a much fore-shortened figure in red draperies, flies head foremost from the skies bearing the host. Christ and St. Peter, who is asleep in the left foreground, are darkly clad. The background, with its tall, gloomy trees, is illuminated by the torches and lanterns of the soldiers entering the garden, while the light of the coming dawn is just breaking along the horizon.

The "Arrest in the Garden" (No. 305)[3] is a composition crowded with figures, and is full of movement and noise. In the centre Judas is kissing Christ, who is surrounded by armed men; and on the left Peter, with uplifted sword, has just struck off the ear of Malchus, who, screaming with pain, and flinging one arm over his head, has fallen prone on the ground, while Christ reaches down his hand to heal the wound. Clever use is made of the spears, maces, and other

[1] Woltmann, 27. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 4; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 21.
[2] Woltmann, 24. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 22.
[3] Woltmann, 25. Reproduced by Davies, p. 38; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 23.



THE LAST SUPPER

Basel Gallery



upraised weapons of the soldiery, which are seen against the dark sky. Many of the movements of the figures are awkward and ugly, and the faces of the men who are dragging Christ away are repulsive and exaggerated, but the general effect produced is an impressive one, and the grouping is noteworthy as the work of a youth of seventeen or eighteen.

The picture of the "Handwashing" (306)[1] is the finest of the series, more particularly in the left-hand half of the composition, which represents Pilate in the act of washing his hands in a golden dish. He is clad in dark green, with an ermine cape over his shoulders, and an Eastern turban, and is seated on a throne or daïs with pillars of coloured marbles and an arch filled in with a shell design. Two attendants, one in yellow and black, hold the basin and pour out the water from a golden ewer. On the right, Christ, in dark blue and crowned with thorns, is led forth to execution. In this picture the colour is less crude and violent than in most of the others of the series, and in technical achievement, more particularly in the draughtsmanship of the group of Pilate and his attendants, is somewhat higher.

In the "Scourging" (No. 307) (Pl. 10),[2] Christ, a nude figure, is bound round the waist to a pillar in the prison, his uplifted arms being fastened to an iron ring above his head. His body is scored with wounds from the lashes of his executioners, his head falls in agony upon his shoulder, and one leg is dragged across the other in the extremity of his pain. The action of his torturers is of the utmost violence, and they jeer at him as they rain heavy blows upon his defenceless body. The scene to be depicted was a brutal and ruthless one, and to drive it home to the spectators, Holbein spared no details or efforts to make it as brutal in paint as it was in deed. The agony of Christ is well expressed, and considerable knowledge is displayed in the drawing of the body. The bright garments of the executioners form a striking though harsh contrast to the pale flesh tints of Christ and the stone wall of the cell, through the doorway of which on the right Pilate is gazing at his victim. Though by no means faultless, this picture has qualities, both of expression and of execution, which are remarkable when the age of the painter is remembered, qualities

[1] Woltmann, 26. Reproduced by Davies, p. 40; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 25.
[2] Woltmann, 28. Reproduced by Davies, p. 42; Knackfuss, fig. 5; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 24.

which already give indications, however faint, of the coming greatness of the master. This picture, and the one of the "Last Supper," are noted in the Amerbach inventory as among Holbein's first works.

Taken as a whole, the series displays numerous reminiscences of the art of the father, sufficiently so, indeed, to make needless the supposition that in the painting of them the artist was assisted by some older practitioner of Basel. They possess considerable dramatic power, and the draughtsmanship, though in parts faulty, is often excellent, the signs of hasty manipulation, which are very apparent, being due, no doubt, to the fact that the pictures were intended to serve merely as processional standards or temporary "stations of the Cross"; but the colour throughout is for the most part crude and harsh. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine how much of them was the work of Hans and how much that of his brother Ambrosius. The three which do not form part of the Amerbach collection were regarded at the time of their acquisition by the Basel Gallery as the handiwork of Holbein the Elder, but this ascription has been long since abandoned. Mr. Davies is of opinion that the "Pilate Washing his Hands" is entirely the work of the younger Hans, and that "The Scourging" is almost wholly by him, while he gives "The Agony in the Garden" and "The Arrest" to Ambrosius alone.[1] One is on safer ground, however, in confining oneself to the assertion that the pictures were produced in the common workshop of the two youths, and that both of them may have had something to do with the painting of all five canvases, but that the predominant hand was that of the younger brother.

These pictures were painted at some date between 1515 and Holbein's departure for Lucerne in 1517, and are based largely upon the knowledge obtained in his father's workshop in Augsburg, before the short visit to Lombardy produced so rapid an awakening of his genius. Dr. Ganz places them in the last-named year, and draws attention to the strong similarity of many of the motives to those of Dürer's "Little Passion" series of engravings, thus showing that the younger artist must have borrowed from them freely.[2] It is probable that the set was originally a larger one, and that one or two of them are now missing. There is an elaborate pen drawing on a dark grey ground, washed with Indian ink and heightened with white,

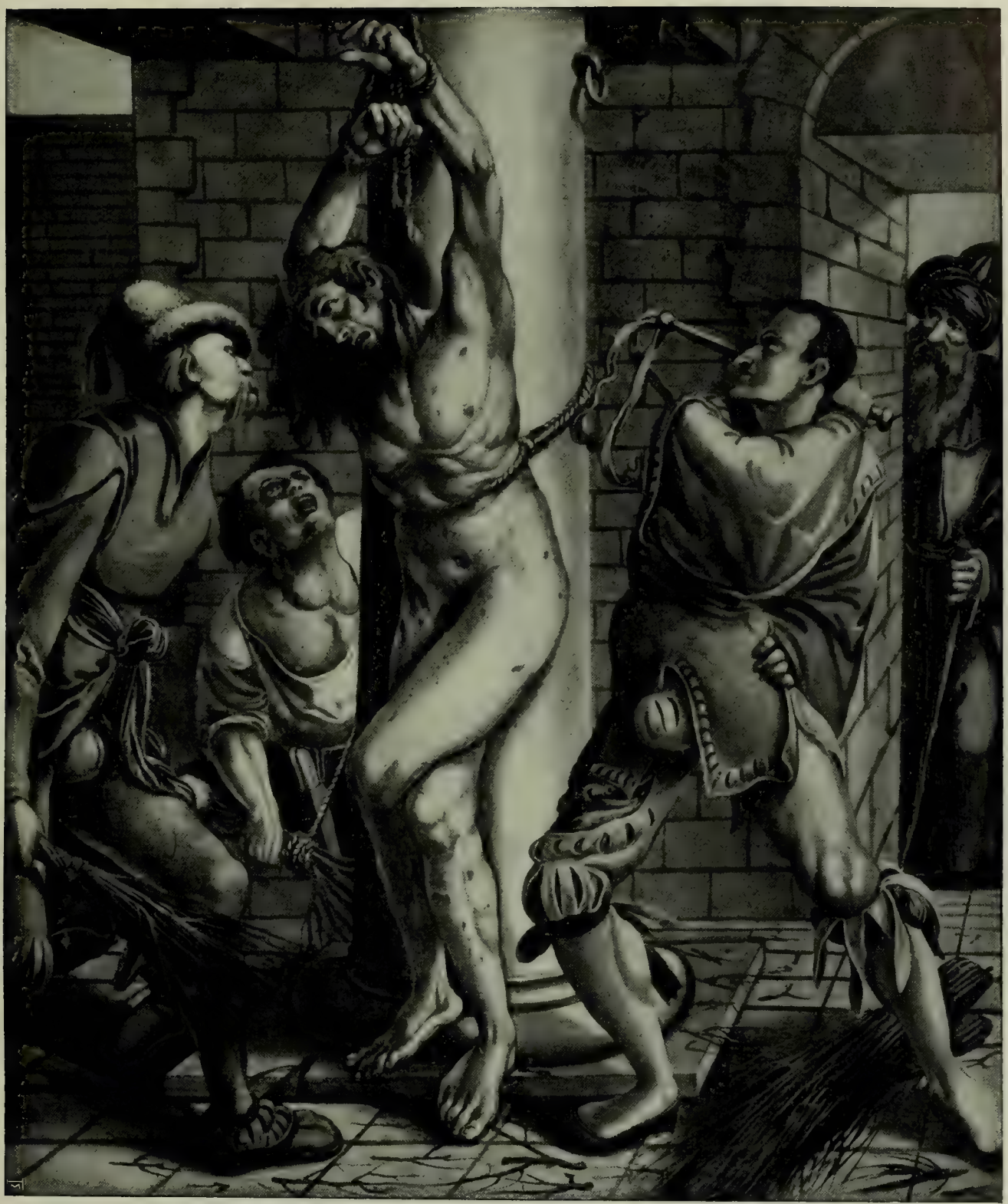
[1] Davies, p. 40.

[2] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 233.



THE SCOURGING OF CHRIST

Basel Gallery



in the Basel Gallery, which is very closely allied to these canvas pictures of the Passion. It represents the "Bearing of the Cross," under the weight of which Christ has fallen on his hands and knees.[1] He is in the centre of a body of soldiers and callous onlookers, who have just issued from the gate, the procession deploying along the outer wall of the town with its circular watch-tower. The head of the procession turns at a sharp angle round the corner of the wall. Christ looks up with his face contorted with agony, while one of the leading soldiers strikes at him with a heavy club, and a second pulls violently at the ropes in order to make him rise again. Behind them a third soldier bears the ladder, while a fourth man is carrying huge nails and the various implements to be used in the Crucifixion. The head of Christ is evidently based upon Dürer's representation in his "Passion" series. In the brutality and grotesqueness of the faces of the soldiery and the lack of expression of those of the accompanying mob, many of whom do not even glance towards the prostrate figure, this drawing closely resembles both the Karlsruhe "Cross-bearing" of 1515, which must have been painted on the journey to or shortly after Holbein's arrival in Basel, and the Passion series just described. In order to bring home to the spectator the cruelty of the scene depicted, and his detestation of it, he makes use of violent movement and brutal types, and even in the head of our Lord the agonized expression is so pronounced that it becomes painful to look upon. After he had gained wider experience of the art of the great painters of Northern Italy, Holbein gradually rid himself of these cruder and more vehement methods, and depicted the pitiful story by means of more natural and less exaggerated types, helped by a deeper insight into character. During these early years he was often employed in painting subjects from the "Passion,"[2] and the gradual change in his point of view and the maturing of his art can be seen very plainly in them, from the early Karlsruhe panel and the canvas series and the drawing just described to the great altar-piece in eight scenes in the Basel Gallery, and, finally, in the masterly set of ten designs for glass-painting in the same collection, in which the fruits of his Italian experience are seen to so great an advantage. In the "Cross-bearing" scene in the large altar-piece, as well as in the later design of the same subject

[1] Woltmann, 51. Reproduced by Ganz, *Handzeichnungen Schweizerischer Meister*, iii. 8; Knackfuss, fig. 66.

[2] See Appendix (A).

for painted glass, the procession issues from a similar gateway and passes along walls with the same round tower shown in the earlier examples. In the former, too, the procession turns sharply to the left, as in the Basel drawing, while the same type of face in the soldiery occurs in all, but gradually becoming less exaggerated and truer to life. The ill-treatment shown to Christ, though still brutal, is less violent in its exhibition, and the Saviour, though faltering under his burden, has not fallen to the ground. In the altar-piece his face is bent downwards, and cast into shadow by the Cross beneath which he staggers, so that his agony is hidden, while in the glass design the face, though agonized, has a spiritual beauty which is not to be found in the drawing now in question. This latter is undated, but Dr. Ganz places it in the year 1517, and he considers that it is most probably Holbein's design for a picture, now lost, which originally formed one of the early "Passion" series on canvas.[1] Holbein drew this figure of Christ over again for the very beautiful woodcut of which only the single impression, in the Amerbach collection, is known. This woodcut,[2] which, from the beauty of its cutting, must be from the hand of Lützelburger, recalls Dürer even more strongly than the drawing, from which it differs slightly. Christ, who has fallen to his knees, has one arm round the bar of the Cross, the other hand resting on the stony ground. A small twisted tree, almost leafless, is on the right, and the background consists of a cloudy sky. The head, with its crown of thorns, long hair falling on the shoulders, its open mouth, and the drops of bloody sweat on the brow, is a wonderful realisation of deep suffering nobly borne.

Both Hans and Ambrosius appear to have obtained regular employment from the Basel printers and publishers very shortly after their arrival in the town, but more particularly from Johann Froben, one of the best known of them all, who was then issuing, among many fine books, numerous works from the pen of Erasmus. The earliest work of this nature which Holbein produced was a title-page in the form of a Renaissance arch with a number of small cupids, one blowing a horn, others with spears, two holding the flat cartoon or roll of parchment in the centre reserved for the lettering of the title-page, and two others supporting a shield with Froben's trade-

[1] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 8.

[2] Woltmann, Woodcuts, 193. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 67.

mark, the caduceus (Pl. 11).[1] This appears to have been cut towards the end of 1515, and did service in several books issued by Froben during the next few years, including More's *Utopia* in 1518. Two small panels at the top contain the artist's signature, "Hans Holb." This interesting specimen of Holbein's youthful skill in design and other examples of his earlier work for book illustrations are dealt with in a later chapter. Another design of the year 1515 formerly attributed to Hans, and afterwards to Ambrosius, was the coat of arms of Petrus Wenck, painted in gouache on parchment, in the Matriculation Book of the Basel University, of which Wenck was rector in that year. It represents a man in Roman armour holding a large shield with a coat of arms in each hand. It is reproduced by Dr. Willy Hes in his recent book on Ambrosius Holbein, Plate xxxviii., who shows that it is not the work of either brother.

By far the most important of Holbein's surviving works of the year 1515 is the series of drawings, eighty-two in all, which he made on the margins of a copy of Erasmus' *Encomium Moriæ*, or "Praise of Folly." Erasmus paid his first visit to Basel in 1513, in order to make arrangements with Froben for the publication of his *Adagia* and his edition of the New Testament. The two men became close friends, and Erasmus, who from that time spent some months every year in Basel, always stayed in Froben's house during these annual visits until 1521, when he made Basel his permanent home. This biting and jesting satire on the follies of mankind, written in Latin, with its punning title on the name of Sir Thomas More, was composed by Erasmus, according to his preface, during his journeys on horseback, and was done in order to beguile the weariness of the way. It was published by Froben in 1514, and Holbein's pictorial commentary upon it was drawn in a copy of the first edition, now preserved in the Basel Gallery.[2] The little pictures have been done with the pen on the broad margins by the side of the passages of the text to which they refer. All that is known of the history of the book is that it possibly belonged at one time to Erasmus himself, and afterwards to the theologian and schoolmaster Oswald Molitor, or Myconius. At a somewhat later date Basilius Amerbach, son of

[1] Woltmann, 234. Reproduced by Davies, p. 186; A. F. Butsch, *Die Bücher-Ornamentik der Renaissance*, 1878, Pl. 41; Wornum, dedication page.

[2] Woltmann, 111.

Erasmus' friend, Bonifacius Amerbach, who continued to add to the collection of Holbein's works formed by his father, obtained it with some difficulty, thanks to the kindly intervention of the painter Jakob Clauser, from Daniel Wieland, the town-clerk of Mühlhausen, who was very loath to part with it. Molitor's ownership of the book is proved by an inscription on the title-page : " Est Osualdi Molitoris Lucerni " ; and the earlier ownership of Erasmus by a second inscription on the second title-page, also in Molitor's handwriting : " Hanc moriam pictam decem diebus ut oblectaretur in ea Erasmus habuit," which shows that the marginal illustrations were completed in ten days, and that Erasmus derived much entertainment from them.[1] Molitor was living in Basel until 1516, and afterwards in Zürich and his native city, Lucerne, returning finally to Basel in 1532. It has been suggested that on the death of Erasmus, of whom Molitor was a friend and admirer, he received the book from Bonifacius Amerbach, who was the philosopher's residuary legatee, and made a point of presenting valuable mementos to a number of Erasmus' closest friends. The book contains annotations in Molitor's handwriting, and from one of them we learn that the illustrations were done in 1515.

It has been suggested, too, that the drawings were made by Holbein at the personal request of Erasmus, which is not very probable ; and again, that Molitor gave the commission, and selected the passages to be illustrated, which is much more likely, and when finished presented the book to his friend, and that it was for this reason that Amerbach made a point of giving it back to him on the death of Erasmus. The book has also been taken as a proof that Holbein had gained a good knowledge of Latin in his school days, and that he selected his own passages for the pictures ; but the few Latin inscriptions on his paintings do not indicate much proficiency in that language. The supposition that Molitor was the prime mover in the matter, and that it was done for him personally, and not as a gift to be presented to Erasmus, is by far the most probable ; for, as stated above, he was in Basel at the time, and this would account for Holbein's apparent knowledge of the language in which the book was written.

[1] This inscription, however, is now regarded as a rather doubtful one, and it is possible that the book was never permanently in the possession of Erasmus. See Hes, *Ambrosius Holbein*, pp. 83–94, where the history of the book and the various theories as to its ownership and the authorship of the drawings are very fully discussed.

HOLBEIN'S EARLIEST TITLE-PAGE

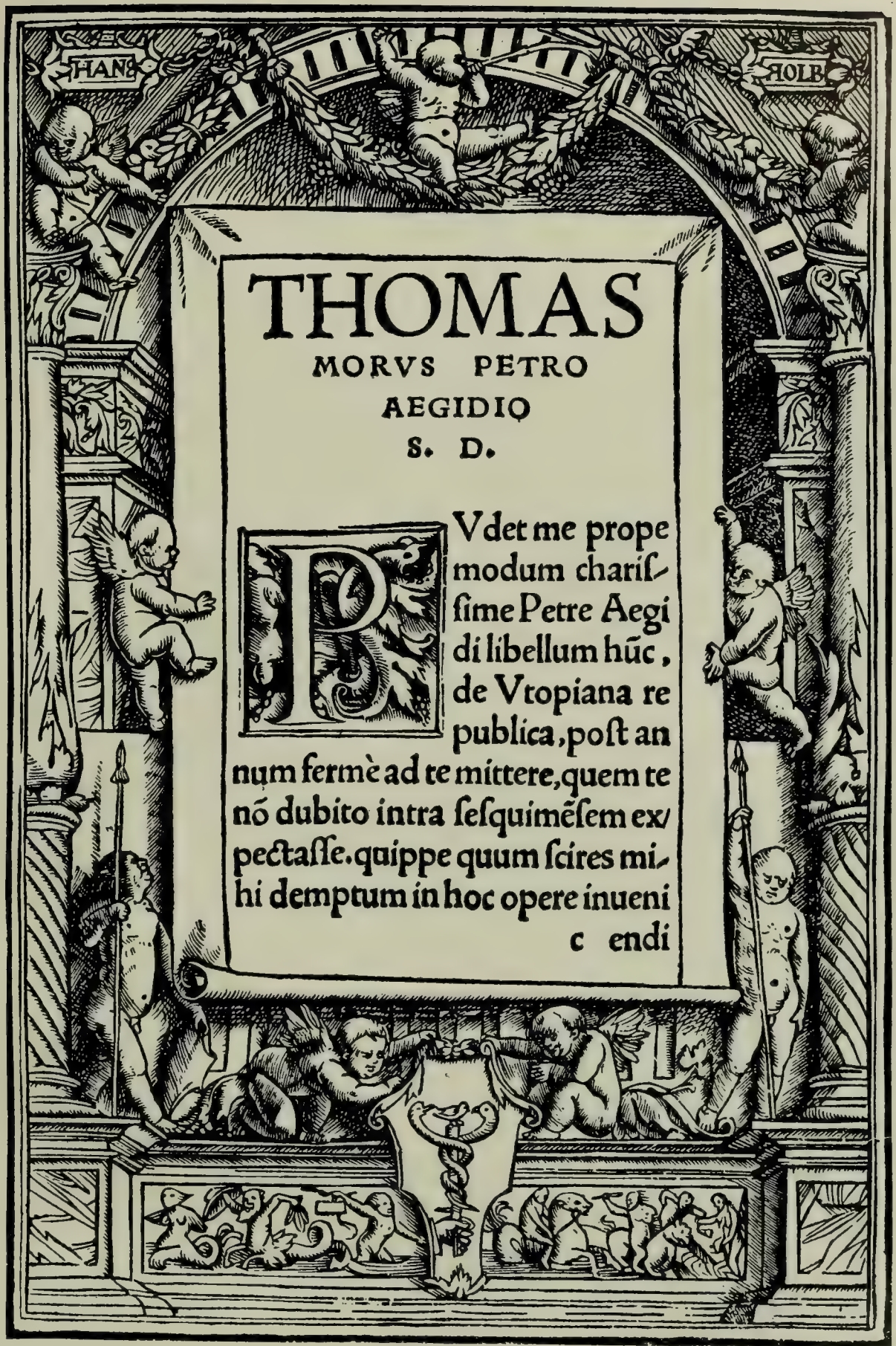
first used in 1515

From a copy of More's "Utopia" in the British Museum.

HOLBEIN'S EARLIEST TITLE-PAGE

First used in 1515

From a copy of More's "Utopia" in the British Museum



THOMAS MORVS PETRO AEGIDIO S. D.

PVdet me prope modum chariſſime Petre Aegidi libellum hũc, de Vtopiana re publica, poſt annum fermè ad te mittere, quem tenõ dubito intra ſeſquimẽſem expectaſſe. quippe quum ſcires mihi demptum in hoc opere inueni

c endi

On the other hand, the pen-drawings in more than one instance do not so much illustrate the incidents and sense of the text, as isolated sentences and phrases which appear to have caught the fancy of the artist, and, therefore, are not likely to have been selected for pictorial comment by a learned student of the book. In recent years the drawings have been subjected to a searching examination and comparison, and Dr. Ganz was the first to point out that it is impossible to accept the whole of them as by Hans Holbein.[1] Considerable variations in style are to be noted, and it is now held, and with good reason, that while the more important share of the work was due to Hans, not only did Ambrosius contribute a certain number of the drawings, but that a third artist, some unknown Basel painter of the school of Urs Graf, and possibly even a fourth, also had a hand in it. One of these drawings, which represents Jupiter seizing the naked Ate by the hair, and flinging her across his knees in order to chastise her with his thunderbolts, bears letters which until recently were regarded as the initials of Ambrosius, though not his usual monogram; but this inscription has now been correctly read by Dr. Hes as the word "ATEN," and refers to the subject, and not to the author of the drawing.[2]

The two brothers must have been in constant communication with Froben, and for the purposes of the work they undertook for him would pay many visits to his house "zum Sessel" in the Fischmarkt, where Erasmus also had his headquarters, and where, no doubt, they first made his acquaintance. The illustrations to the "Praise of Folly" may thus have been begun in some idle moment in a copy of the book found lying about in Froben's office, to pass the time while waiting for proofs or instructions in connection with work in hand; and having been thus begun, the interest would grow, and the printer himself would encourage its completion, and, perhaps, show it to Erasmus himself more than once during the short period of ten days in which the eighty-two drawings were accomplished. Any lack of profound Latinity on the part of the brothers, who in turn jotted down their fancies on the book's margin, may have been overcome by Froben himself translating passages of the book to them.

[1] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schweiz. Mstr.*, note to i. 52.

[2] Dr. Hes subjects the drawings to careful analysis, and gives a complete list, together with the suggested authorship of each of them, in *Ambrosius Holbein*, pp. 90–94 and 161–166.

The sketches[1] are drawn freely and rapidly, without any attempt at elaboration or such careful draughtsmanship as would have been necessary had they been a commission or intended in the end to serve as woodcut illustrations in some future edition of the text. Many of them are witty and to the point, and show that Holbein had a true sense of humour. The wit is, perhaps, not so biting as that of Erasmus himself, but it matches in character the satirical humour and popular tone of the book. The contributions of Hans are both the most numerous and the best, and some of them, in the freedom and certainty of their draughtsmanship, show a distinct advance in his art.

The opening picture represents Folly, as a young woman in cap and bells, mounting the pulpit in order to sing her own praises to a listening world, and in the concluding one she is seen descending the same steps with a gesture of farewell, leaving a gaping and astonished audience behind her (Pl. 12 (1)). One of the most beautiful of the drawings, representing Penelope at her loom (Pl. 12 (2)), is now given to Ambrosius, but it bears so close a resemblance to the style of some of the figures in the "Dance of Death" woodcuts, that it is difficult to believe that it is not by Hans.[2] Some of the representations of single figures, such as the Pope under a high canopy (Pl. 12 (3)), the Cardinal (Pl. 12 (4)), the Bishop (Pl. 12 (5)), and the Astronomer, are drawn with greater care, and show a more serious point of view, than is anywhere disclosed in the book itself. In these Holbein is seen at his best, and also in the charming little picture of nuns kneeling with lighted candles before a picture or carving of the Virgin and Child, which calls to mind more than one of his later designs for painted glass (Pl. 12 (6)). In several of them, such as the group of men engaged in an animated theological discussion, and that of the young man looking back so intently at the fair damsel who comes after him that, without noticing it, he has stepped into a basketful of eggs belonging to an old market woman, there is a landscape background of town and river and distant Alps, charmingly though hastily indicated (Pl. 13 (1)). Among the classical

[1] Twelve of them reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schweiz. Mstr.*, i. 52; the whole set by Mantz, but so badly engraved that they are of little service for purposes of comparison; the whole of the drawings now attributed to Ambrosius by Hes, Pls. xvi.–xx., and p. 139.

[2] Dr. Hes points out the similarity of this figure to that of the schoolmistress in the "Schoolmaster's Signboard," and considers that Ambrosius had a share in the painting of the latter. See *Ambrosius Holbein*, p. 93.



MARGINAL DRAWINGS IN A COPY OF THE "PRAISE OF FOLLY"

BASEL GALLERY


ΜΩΡΙΑΣ ΕΓΚΩΜΙΩΝ Felicuter abſolutum.

1



2


Summi pō
tifices.

3



4


De epiſco
pis.

5


Supſtitio
ſus cultus
imaginum
Mola

6

allusions there are comic representations of the slaying of Niobe's children,[1] of Vulcan splitting the skull of Jupiter,[1] of Atlas staggering under the weight of the world,[1] of Polyphemus dancing, and of Hercules quieting Cerberus by means of a sausage.[1] Nicolas de Lyra is represented reading the Scriptures, and at the same time playing a small hand-organ, in allusion to his name (Pl. 13 (2)). King Solomon stands pointing to his open book (Pl. 13 (3)), and another excellent little drawing is that of the young courtier or nobleman (Pl. 13 (4)). The sketch of Folly talking to his puppet (Pl. 13 (5)) is one of the illustrations now given to the unknown artist who collaborated with the Holbeins.

The drawing illustrating the phrase, "the golden collar of princes," is an unmistakable portrait of the Emperor Maximilian. A portrait, much less easily recognised, is that of the writer of the book. In one passage Erasmus has mentioned his own name, and opposite to it Holbein drew the philosopher seated at a desk in his study, in scholar's cap and gown, engaged in writing the *Adagia*. Through an arched opening is seen a view of mountain and lake (Pl. 13 (6)). To make certain that there should be no doubt as to whom the portrait represented, Holbein has written the name "Erasmus" at the top of the arch. Molitor, in a marginal note, states that when Erasmus came to this drawing, in which he is depicted as a comparatively youthful man, he exclaimed, "Ohé! Ohé! if Erasmus still looked like this, he would certainly take a wife." The name "Holbein" occurs over one of the other sketches, which represents a fat and coarse-looking carouser seated at table, draining a bottle of wine, and at the same time fondling a woman seated by him, and illustrating the passage from Horace which refers to "a fat and splendid pig from the herd of Epicurus" (Pl. 13 (7)). This is said to have been written by the sage himself in playful revenge for the introduction of his own portrait among the foolish of mankind.[2]

This somewhat primitive jest appears to be the sole foundation for the statements of several of Holbein's earlier biographers that he was of a gross and sensual character, too fond of the wine-cup, and, in consequence, lived in poverty. The worst offender in this way was Charles Patin, a French physician who had settled in Basel

[1] By Ambrosius Holbein.

[2] The name, however, was not written by Erasmus, but is a later addition.

in the seventeenth century, after having been forced to leave Paris on account of some misbehaviour. He was the first to bring this accusation against the painter, and later writers copied him without verifying his statements. Van Mander and Sandrart, who repeated all the gossip they could collect, do not allude to this supposed weakness in the painter's character. Patin's misrepresentations occur in a short life of Holbein, filled with inaccuracies, which he wrote as a preface to an edition of the *Praise of Folly*, issued in Basel in 1676, in which, for the first time, these marginal illustrations were published, being engraved for the book by C. Merian from copies of the originals made by W. Stettler. They at once became highly popular, and various editions followed, both on the Continent and in England. Patin evidently allowed his imagination to run away with him in his interpretation of this somewhat feeble joke made at Holbein's expense. There is absolutely no foundation for the legend thus set going; the painter's whole career, the high perfection of his technical powers, and the extraordinary amount of work he accomplished in his short life are more than sufficient in themselves to refute it.

There is a small portrait in the Grand Ducal Museum at Darmstadt, dated 1515, at one time in the possession of the Von Schinz family of Zürich, which represents, at half-length, a young man in scarlet dress and cap, with long fair hair falling over the ears, the head standing out strongly against a bright blue background.[1] It is inscribed across the bottom with the date between the initials H.H., and until recently has been considered by most writers to be a work of the younger Hans, and was reproduced as his by Herr Knackfuss. In 1904 Dr. His first drew attention to its close similarity to the work of Ambrosius, and most modern criticism is in agreement with him. It bears, in style and touch, a far stronger likeness to the art of Ambrosius than to that of Hans, and has much in common with the portrait of Hans Herbster in the Basel Gallery (No. 293), painted by him in the following year,[2] which, when it was in Lord Northbrook's collection, was regarded as from the brush of his brother; and still

[1] Woltmann, under H. H. the Elder, 182. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 6; Ganz, *Holbein* (*K. der K.*), p. 203; Hes, Pl. xxxiv.

[2] Dr. Hes regards this portrait as the work of Herbster himself. See *Ambrosius Holbein*, p. 145.







MARGINAL DRAWINGS IN A COPY OF THE "PRAISE OF FOLLY"

Basel Gallery



1



2



4



6

Holbein



3



5



7

more so to the two portraits of unknown boys, also in the Basel Gallery (Nos. 294–5). There is, indeed, a fine drawing of the head of an unknown man by Ambrosius, belonging to the Basel Kunstverein, which as a portrait bears so strong a likeness to the Darmstadt picture that it might almost be regarded as a study for it.[1] In the drawing the position is reversed, the subject being turned to the right instead of to the left, but the dress and hair are the same, and, judging from the technique, both are from the same hand. The inscription on the Darmstadt portrait is possibly of a somewhat later date than the painting, and there are faint indications of an earlier one beneath it. When this earlier one was replaced or renewed, the initial of the Christian name may have been changed from A. to H. In his book Dr. Woltmann included the portrait among the works of Hans Holbein the Elder, but modern criticism does not follow him in this.

At this early period of his career the young painter was willing to undertake any piece of work, however humble, that came to his hand. Thus, in 1516, he painted a sign-board for some Basel schoolmaster to hang outside his house (Pl. 14). The panel was painted on both sides, the upper and larger portion of each being filled with a long inscription in German stating that the owner of the sign was prepared to teach reading and writing in the shortest possible time, and at moderate prices, to all comers, citizens, artisans, women, and maidens ; and that if in any instance the scholar proved too stupid to learn, no fee would be demanded, but that children were to be paid for in advance at each quarter. The inscription is the same on both sides, one being dated " 1516," and the other " Anno MCCCCCXVI." In the narrow space left below, Holbein depicted two scenes representing the interior of the school, with benches against the wall under the leaded windows. In one of them the schoolmaster is shown on the left, in red and yellow, seated at his high desk, with a birch rod in his hand, teaching a small boy in green to read. On the other side of the room is the schoolmistress, in red dress and white coif, at a similar desk, instructing a little girl clad in blue and green. Between them sit two small lads at their books, one in blue, and the other in yellow with a red cap. The second picture represents the same room from another point of view, with

[1] Woltmann, under H. H. the Elder, 106, but he afterwards attributed it to the younger Hans. Reproduced by Ganz, *Handzeichnungen Schweizerischer Meister*, &c., ii. 2 ; Hes, Pl. xxiv.

a washing cistern and basin, and a long towel fastened to the wall. In the centre is a large table at which the schoolmaster is engaged with two young men dressed in the fashion of the landsknechte, one in trunks of red and yellow stripes, who is wrestling with a pen, and the other in green, who is listening with an intent and highly-puzzled expression to the instructions of the master, who is attempting to teach him to read. Holbein has represented the mental perturbation of this second pupil with considerable humour. Both pictures display signs of some haste in the execution, but they must have served the purpose for which they were intended admirably. Though slight works, they have undoubted charm, and, small as they are, the youthful painter has managed to give considerable expression in both the faces and the gestures of his figures, while the light which comes through the windows is well managed. This sign-board, now in the Basel Gallery (Nos. 310–11), has been split into two, in order that both sides may be exhibited.[1] When in actual use it must have hung from an iron bar over the pavement. It is quite possible that it was painted for Oswald Molitor, who, as already pointed out, was at that time in Basel, engaged in teaching.

A much more important work of the same year, 1516, also in the Basel Gallery (No. 312),[2] is the double portrait of the Burgomaster of Basel, Jakob Meyer or Meier "zum Hasen," so called from the sign of a hare which hung upon his house, and his second wife, Dorothea Kannengiesser (Pl. 15). This new patron of Holbein's proved to be an excellent friend, giving him more than one commission, and obtaining important public work for him. Meyer was a man of influence in Basel, and was the first citizen not of knightly birth to be elected as burgomaster. His election took place in 1516, and it was no doubt in honour of this event that he ordered the portraits. He was again elected to the post in 1518 and 1520—no one was allowed to fill it for two years in succession; but in 1521 he fell into disgrace, through secretly accepting a higher pension from the French king than the laws of the city allowed. For this he was dismissed from office, and made to refund the money, with the exception of the fifteen crowns

[1] Woltmann, 5, 6. Reproduced by Knackfuss, figs. 10, 11; Ganz, *Holbein* (*K. der K.*), pp. 10, 11.

[2] Woltmann, 11. Reproduced by Davies, pp. 44, 46; Knackfuss, figs. 14, 15; Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 12, 13.

BACK AND FRONT OF A SCHOOLMASTER'S HANGING SIGN

1516

BASEL GALLERY





DOUBLE PORTRAIT OF JAKOB MEYER AND HIS SECOND WIFE, DOROTHEA KANNENGIESSER

1516

BASEL GALLERY



which was the permitted sum. Objecting to this treatment, he was clapped into prison, and was only released on his family paying a fine. During his burgomastership many important changes took place in the municipal government of Basel, and the Church and the nobility were gradually deprived of all their privileges. In his younger days he had served as a soldier in Italy with some distinction, and after his deprivation of office he went there again, in 1524, as captain of a Basel troop in the pay of France. On his return home he attempted without success to obtain the annulment of the decree against him of exclusion from all public offices; and during the religious disturbances of 1529 he was at the head of the Catholic party, then in armed opposition to the Reformers. The reasons which induced Meyer to choose Holbein as the painter of the portraits of himself and his young, comely, and newly-married wife, when there were older painters of repute in the town, are not known; but his first wife, Magdalena Baer, had been a sister of the Hans Baer for whom the Zürich table had been painted, and it may have been owing to this connection that the young artist obtained his first introduction to the burgomaster.

In the portraits, which were painted and framed as a diptych, Meyer and his wife are shown at half-length and three-quarters face, turned towards one another. Meyer is wearing a black dress, open at the front to show his white, gold-embroidered shirt, and a scarlet cap on his bushy, curly brown hair, which covers his ears. He is clean-shaven, and holds in his left hand a coin, which is introduced to indicate his calling as a money-changer, and also, it is supposed, to commemorate the charter granted to the Baselers in January 1516 for the mintage of gold coins. On the same hand he wears several heavy gold rings. His eyes are dark brown, and his complexion of a ruddy hue, and his face shows shrewdness and strength of character, while the eyes are intelligent and determined. His wife wears a red dress, fronted and edged with a broad band of black velvet across the breast, embroidered with circles of gold ornamentation. The dress is cut low, to show a white under-bodice worked in elaborate designs, with hanging tassels and a band of gold embroidery of a heart-shaped pattern. Her hair and ears are covered with a large white cap of thin linen decorated with bands of gold of a checked design, of the hooded shape common in Switzerland at that period, with a

long white fall which is brought over the right shoulder and reaches the waist. Round her neck hang two thin chains, one of gold and one of pearls, the ends of which are hidden beneath the bodice. Her hands are not shown. Though not strikingly handsome, she has youth and good looks in her favour. The two portraits are placed against one continuous architectural background, seen in rather strong perspective. In the centre an elaborate gilt frieze of Renaissance ornamentation is supported by short pillars of red marble, and on either side larger columns, also decorated with gilded carving, form the supports of two arches. Through these the blue sky is seen, against which the wife's head stands out in strong colour contrast. Owing to the perspective arrangement, the opening is smaller in the portrait of Meyer, but part of his red cap is placed against the blue sky with equally striking effect. The signature, "H.H.," and the date, "1516," are placed on a small shield in the entablature over Meyer's head.[1]

In these two portraits—the earliest in point of date which can be ascribed to him with absolute certainty—Holbein, though not yet twenty years old, shows himself to be already a master of portraiture. The qualities they possess are the same, though not yet perfectly developed, as those which are to be discovered in such complete perfection in the work of his maturity. They show that he had already the power of seizing character, and was accurate and unhesitating in draughtsmanship. All the details, more particularly the elaborate ornaments of the woman's dress, are drawn with a truth and delicacy that already falls but little short of the brilliance of his technique in such a masterpiece of portraiture as the Georg Gisze in Berlin, or the Jane Seymour in Vienna. The colour, though rich and strongly contrasted, is harmonious and delicate in the general effect it produces. The whole work, indeed, gives the impression that it is from the hand of an artist who is already sure of his methods. There is nothing faltering about it, and few indications that the painter was still only on the threshold of his career. All that was to come in the future was a deeper insight into

[1] On the back of the portrait of Meyer, Holbein painted, four years later, the sitter's coat of arms, surmounted by a scroll inscribed "I.M. 1520." (Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 30.) There is a good old copy of the wife's portrait in the collection of Mr. Ralph Brocklebank, Haughton Hall, Tarporley, which was previously in the William Graham collection; and a copy of both portraits in the Basel Gallery, No. 350, from the Faesch collection.

nature, a greater perfection of methods which in the main were to remain unaltered throughout his life, and a more brilliant understanding and application of the lessons of the Italian Renaissance to the more decorative portions of his pictures.[1]

The rapidity with which his art was maturing is shown more strikingly, perhaps, in the two studies for the portraits, now in the Basel Gallery (Pl. 16),[2] than even in the pictures themselves. These heads, of the same dimensions as the finished works, are about half the size of life. They are drawn in silver-point, with fine and delicate lines, and equally delicate modelling of the flesh, which has been afterwards touched here and there with red chalk. They display the utmost care and precision, though the line is less subtle and searching than it is in the drawings of his greater English period. They are, nevertheless, extraordinary work for so young a man, and of great beauty. They show a method of procedure in the taking of portraits which remained Holbein's almost invariable practice throughout his life. He always made these preparatory drawings—the later ones, of course, with much greater freedom—in which the form, character, and expression of his sitter were fixed once and for all. Colour was occasionally indicated, but as a rule all that he did was to jot down on the margin of the paper a few notes for future guidance. Thus on the drawing of Meyer, he has written notes as to the colour of the hair, eyebrows, and cap.[3] It was his habit, apparently, to rely upon his memory and these curt notes when he came to paint the actual portrait. This method enabled him to dispense with many sittings; after a few hours spent in close observation of his subject, he had obtained all the information he wanted. For the rest, he depended on what must have been a remarkable memory both for colour and form.

During 1517 Holbein left Basel, and was absent for a considerable time. There is one work by him, however, of this year which in all probability was painted before his departure, as it belonged to Bonifacius Amerbach. This is the "Adam and Eve"[4] of the Basel

[1] According to Stödtner, these portraits show the influence of Burgkmair.

[2] Woltmann, 33, 34. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 18 and iii. 7, and the "Meyer" in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 2; the "Dorothea" by Davies, p. 46; both by Knackfuss, figs. 12, 13.

[3] "—ogen schwarz—baret rot mosfarb—brauenn gelber dan das har—grusen wit brauenn."

[4] Woltmann, 9. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 16; Ganz, *Holbein* (*K. der K.*), p. 14.

Gallery (No. 313) (Pl. 17), which is painted in oils on paper. It is entered in the Amerbach catalogue as: "Ein Adam vnd Eva mit dem äpfel H. Holb. vf holz mit olfarb." It is a study from life of the head and shoulders of the same models used for the heads of St. John and the Virgin already described, while the "Adam" also served as model for the head of Christ in "The Scourging" of the early Passion series on canvas. Eve, with a long curl of fair hair falling over her right shoulder and breast, holds the apple in her left hand, her face being of a rather dull and heavy type. Adam, with dark curly hair, and a long moustache which drops below his chin, and head slightly bent, has his right arm flung across Eve's shoulders. The general tone is brownish, but considerable effect is produced by the contrast between the dark complexion of Adam and the blonder tones of Eve's flesh.

It is boldly and thinly executed, and the lines of the drawing are still plainly to be distinguished through the paint. The fingers of Eve's hand, with high lights on the nails, are excellently modelled, already giving indications of what afterwards became one of the chief features of his portraiture, the beauty and character of the hands. Both heads stand out against a background which is now black. It is signed and dated, "1517, H.H." Dr. Ganz points out the strong influence of both Baldung and Dürer this small study betrays.[1] It also bears a curious resemblance to the heads in the well-known picture of "Adam and Eve" by Mabuse at Hampton Court[2] (No. 385 (580)), though the position of the two figures is reversed. It is seen more particularly in Adam's mass of dark hair covered with small curls, Eve's long ringlets, the expression of pain on the faces, and the position of Adam's arm across Eve's shoulders. There is another very similar, but smaller, "Adam and Eve" by Mabuse in the Berlin Gallery (No. 661), displaying a composite art, half Flemish and half Italian, which is signed and dated 1516.

[1] Ganz, *Holbein* (*K. der K.*), p. 233.
[2] Reproduced by Law, *Royal Gallery of Hampton Court*, p. 154.

JAKOB MEYER

DOROTHEA KANNENGIESSER

Studies for the Double Portrait, 1516

Silver-point and red chalk drawings

BASEL GALLERY







ADAM AND EVE

1517

BASEL GALLERY



CHAPTER IV

WORK IN LUCERNE AND THE VISIT TO LOMBARDY

Holbein leaves Basel for Lucerne—Ambrosius Holbein—The known facts of his short life—His pictures, designs, and woodcuts—Records of Hans in Lucerne—His decoration of the Hertenstein house—Description of the wall-paintings—Portrait of Benedikt von Hertenstein—Holbein's visit to North Italy—"The Last Supper" at Basel, and Leonardo's influence—Evidences of his Italian journey in his designs for painted glass—Possible visit to Altorf—Return to Lucerne—Drawings of the "Archangel Michael" and of "Miners at Work"—Pictures painted for the Church of the Augustines in Lucerne.



N 1517 Holbein left Basel, and was absent for nearly two years. For the greater part of the time he was in Lucerne, but traces of him are to be found in other parts of Switzerland, and it is practically certain that he also paid a short visit to Lombardy. It is possible, too, that during this time he may have returned to Basel more than once for a few weeks in connection with his work for Froben and other publishers. Whether he left Basel in the first place because he found that it gave him less employment than he had expected, or from a spirit of pure adventure, or, again, on account of the offer of some definite commission, such as the decoration of the Hertenstein house, is not known; but the last-named reason is the most probable one, for it cannot be said that his talents had been unrecognised in Basel. Although there is no record of any earlier wall-paintings than those he was now to complete in Lucerne, it is quite possible that the two brothers had already carried out work of this nature, and that Jakob von Hertenstein had seen it and had admired it, and so decided to employ one or both of the young men to decorate in like fashion the new mansion he had just completed. Even if this were not the case, Lucerne at that time offered nearly as many inducements to a young artist as Basel itself. The two towns were closely allied, and artists and learned scholars constantly passed backwards and forwards between them; and Holbein had at least one acquaintance in Lucerne, Oswald Molitor, who had recently returned from Basel to his native city, and was practising there as a schoolmaster.

There is an old legend in Lucerne that at this period the elder Holbein was living in the town with his two sons, but it does not appear to have any foundation in fact.[1] There is much more probability that Ambrosius accompanied Hans, or followed him shortly afterwards, and remained for some time at work with his brother on the Hertenstein house; though here again there is no actual record of such an absence from Basel. There is, however, a fine drawing by him in the Basel Gallery (No. 297), a half-length figure of a young man of the Von Rüdiswiler family,[2] which is thought to afford some proof that Ambrosius was in Lucerne at the time, for the Rüdiswiler family was one of the most important in the district, their chief seat being at Rüdiswil. Members of this house were settled both in Lucerne and Solothurn, and it is supposed that Ambrosius drew the portrait of this youth of patrician birth in the former town during 1517. The sitter is shown in profile, in a heavy brown cloak, wearing his cap on the side of his head. His fair straight hair covers his ears, and he holds a large red heart in his hand. The drawing has at some time been cut out round the outline and mounted on parchment, and the inscription in secret cipher, below the coat of arms, had been copied at the same time from the one which existed on the original drawing before the cutting out took place.

Ambrosius, however, must have been back again in Basel by the summer of 1518, for in that year, on June 6, he purchased his right of citizenship. The first mention of him in the town-books is on September 26, 1516, when "Ambrosy Holbein von augspurg, ein maler," appeared in court as a witness in a libel action brought by Bastian Lepzelter, the sculptor, against a tailor, Andreas Huber, for insulting remarks made on the previous 25th of July, when the plaintiff, Ambrosius, and another friend, were enjoying themselves in the house of Hans Herbster.[3] Ambrosius may perhaps have been working as a journeyman under Herbster at the time. He joined the Painters' Guild "zum Himmel," to which bakers, saddlers, and barber-surgeons also belonged, on St. Matthias' Day, February 24, 1517. The entry in the book of the guild runs as follows: "Item

[1] This theory is held by Herr Th. von Liebenau. See his *H. H. des Jüng. Fresken am Hertensteinhause zu Luzern*, &c., 1888.

[2] Woltmann, 16. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 52; Hes, Pl. xxx.

[3] E. His, "Die Baseler Archive über H. H.," in Zahn's *Jahrbuch*, 1870, p. 113. Woltmann, i. p. 135; Hes, p. 16.

es hatt entpfangen die zunfft vff sant Mattistag ambross Holbein maler von augspurg In dem xvii Jor." According to an order of the Basel Council issued in 1487, any one entering a guild was obliged to take oath to purchase the freedom of the city within a month. This Ambrosius did not do until the following year, which possibly indicates that he left the town shortly after joining the guild, early in 1517, without fulfilling his obligations. It may be that he had not sufficient money for the payment of the fees, for when, on June 6, 1518, he became a burgher, he was only able to find one gulden out of the four which were required, Jörg Schweiger, the goldsmith, whose portrait, now in the Basel Gallery (No. 296),[1] he painted about this time, standing surety for the remainder. The portrait may have been taken as some return for the kindness shown on this occasion. It should be noted, however, that this portrait is not attributed to Ambrosius by all critics, and differs to some extent from his accustomed style.

The entry in the archives runs as follows: "Item do hat burckrecht kufft Ambrosy Holbein der moler uff Sundag nach corporis Xpi Im xviij jor umb iiij glden und hat bar gen j glden und sol al fronfasten j ort bitz zu bezallung dofür ist bürg und schuldner meister Jerg schweiger der goldschmit."

This is the last reference to the elder brother so far discovered in the official archives, and as no work by him of a date later than 1518 is known, it is supposed that he died in that year or early in 1519. Apparently the last work upon which he was engaged was a series of woodcut illustrations for the *Geuchmatt* of Thomas Murner, which was published by Adam Petri in Basel in April 1519. The first four only of the illustrations to this book[2] were designed by Ambrosius, which would seem to indicate that he died before he had completed the commission. The only other supposition, and a most improbable one, is that he suddenly left Basel at about this time in search of better fortune elsewhere, though no traces of such removal have so far been discovered. Almost all the few works which can be attributed to him with any certainty are now in the Basel Gallery. In addition to those already mentioned, there are two charming half-length portraits of small boys in a Renaissance frame-

[1] Woltmann, 5. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxxvi.

[2] Woltmann, Woodcuts, 18–21. See Hes, p. 23, who reproduces all four woodcuts, Pls. xiv.–xv.

work (Nos. 294–5) (Pl. 18),[1] for one of which, the boy turned to the left, the silver-point drawing is in the Albertina, Vienna,[2] while a similar study for the other, recently published for the first time by Dr. Willy Hes, is in the Rodriguez Collection, Paris.[3] A half-length portrait of a little girl, in a similar framework, also published for the first time by Dr. Hes, is in the Ambraser Collection, Vienna, but not exhibited.[4] The strong likeness to the two lads proves almost conclusively that she was their sister. On the medallion which hangs from a chain round her neck are the initials H. V. So far, no preliminary drawing for this portrait has been discovered. In the Basel Gallery there are also "The Saviour as the Man of Sorrows" (No. 292),[5] an oil-painting adapted from the title-page to Dürer's "Great Passion" series; and a study of two death's heads behind a trellised window (No. 299).[6] Both pictures form part of the Amerbach Collection, but the latter is not regarded as the work of Ambrosius by Dr. Hes. A somewhat similar picture, attributed to Hans, was in the Arundel Collection, and was entered in the 1655 inventory as "Testa de Morte con osse." The portrait of Hans Herbster, also at Basel (No. 293),[7] which has been already mentioned, was at one time regarded as a work by Hans the Younger, but since its purchase for the Basel Gallery it has been given, more correctly, to the elder brother. Dr. Hes, however, considers that it is not his work, but rather a portrait of Herbster painted by himself.[8] It is a bust portrait, turned to the right, representing a middle-aged man with long brown hair and a large bushy beard, wearing a dark dress and a red cap over his right ear. He is placed under an archway of Renaissance architecture, his head standing out against the blue sky seen through the opening. From the top of the pillars which support the arch hang two festoons of fruit and leaves held by small amorini. Above the heads of these boys two small tablets are suspended, one containing the date, "1516," and the other the now illegible remains

[1] Woltmann, 2, 3. No. 294 reproduced in the Basel Catalogue, 1908, and both by Hes, Pl. xxxi., xxxii.

[2] Woltmann, 24. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxix. [3] Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxviii.

[4] Woltmann, 23. See Hes, pp. 124–6. Reproduced by him, Pl. xxxiii.

[5] Woltmann, 1. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxiii. [6] Woltmann, 4.

[7] Woltmann, under Hans the Younger, 203. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxxvii.; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 204.

[8] See Hes, pp. 144–6.

PORTRAITS OF TWO BROTHERS

Ambrosius Holbein

Basel Gallery





of the painter's monogram. Across the bottom is the inscription, "IOANNES HERBSTER PICTOR OPORINI PATER," the last words referring to his son, the well-known scholar of Basel, who afterwards turned printer, and Latinised his name to Oporinus. Herbster himself, like the Burgomaster Meyer, had taken his part in the Italian wars, and was in the battle of Pavia in 1512. In addition to several drawings already described, the Basel Gallery also possesses a charming study in silver-point and red chalk of a young girl, inscribed "ANNE," and dated 1518, in which a very tender, delicate feeling for the beauty of childhood is shown (Pl. 19);[1] the head of a young woman in a hood in profile to the left;[2] a very fine drawing of the head of a young man turned slightly to the left, wearing a black cap on the side of his head, signed and dated 1517;[3] and a design for painted glass, representing the foundation of the city of Basel (Pl. 20),[4] a pen drawing lightly touched with colour, which was formerly attributed to Hans. In the centre are the arms of Basel, supported by basilisks, under an archway in course of building, which is decorated with a series of empty shields for coats of arms. In the landscape background on either side are men engaged in erecting buildings on the river bank, and in the foreground is a boat filled with soldiers. The commander of this troop, the legendary founder of the town, has the name "Basilius" engraved upon his breastplate.

One of the most important of the few paintings by him which have been so far traced, is the portrait of an unknown young man in the Royal Hermitage Gallery in St. Petersburg (Pl. 21).[5] The sitter is turned three-quarters to the left, under a Renaissance arcading, and is wearing a green dress and white shirt ornamented with lace. On his black hat are the initials "F. G." or "C. I. E." (?). His right hand rests on the iron pommel of his sword. In the distance is a mountainous landscape with a palace or large building of elaborate Renaissance architecture, and on a column hangs a tablet with the inscription, "ETATIS. SVE. XX. M.D. XVIII." From the arch above his head is suspended a garland of leaves bound round with ribbon, to

[1] Woltmann, 6. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 6; Hes, Pl. xxvi.
[2] Woltmann, 7. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxvii.
[3] Woltmann, 8. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xvi.; Hes, Pl. xxv.
[4] Woltmann, 10. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 22; Knackfuss, fig. 39; Hes, Pl. xxii.
[5] Woltmann, 22. Reproduced by Hes, Pl. xxxv.

which is attached a small cartouche with the monogram AHB, of which the H is the most distinct letter.[1] The drawing, mentioned above, signed and dated "1517 ÆH," was considered by Woltmann to be a study for this portrait, and there is certainly a strong likeness between the two. The arrangement of the foreground architectural setting, and the position of the garland supporting the cartouche, of which only the left-hand loop is shown, prove that the picture formed one of a pair, the missing half in all probability containing a portrait of the young man's wife.

In addition to works of this nature, Ambrosius produced, during the few years he was in Basel, a considerable number of designs for title-pages, initial letters, and other decorations for books, issued by Froben, Cratander, Adam Petri, Thomas Wolff, and Pamphilus Gegenbach. One of the best known is the "Calumny of Apelles,"[2] the painting described by Lucian, which bears the monogram of Ambrosius and the date 1517. It was first used in Erasmus' version of the New Testament, published by Froben in 1519. He had a share, too, in the numerous illustrations and ornaments which Froben provided for the first edition of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, upon which work his brother, Urs Graf, and others, were also engaged. Ambrosius was the designer of the charming little picture representing the scene in the garden of Petrus Ægidius in Antwerp in which Raphael Hythlodæus, the traveller, is describing to his host and Sir Thomas his adventures in the island of Utopia.[3] A larger woodcut, with a bird's-eye view of the island, on which the chief places are marked as given in the text, with Hythlodæus in the foreground pointing out its features to Ægidius and More, is also his work (Pl. 22).[4] It is difficult in every case to separate the designs of the two brothers in this field of art, more particularly as in many instances they have been so badly cut that much of the beauty of the original line has been lost. In book-illustration the art of the two young men had much in common, though Ambrosius was never as powerful or varied in conception as Hans, nor possessed of as great a mastery of technical execution. His woodcuts are not so thoroughly imbued with the true spirit of the

[1] This picture was included in the Exposition de la Toison d'Or, Bruges, 1907, No. 130.

[2] Woltmann, Woodcuts, 7. Reproduced by Butsch, *Die Bücher-Ornamentik der Renaissance*, Pl. 46; Hes, Pl. x.

[3] Woltmann, Woodcuts, 17.

[4] Woltmann, Woodcuts, 16.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG GIRL, "ANNE," 1518

Silver-point and red chalk drawing

AMBROSIUS HOLBEIN

BASEL GALLERY


ANNE



THE FOUNDING OF BASEL

Design for Painted Glass

AMBROSIUS HOLBEIN

BASEL GALLERY



PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN YOUNG MAN

1518

Ambrosius Holbein

Royal Hermitage Gallery, St. Petersburg





ILLUSTRATION TO SIR THOMAS MORE'S "UTOPIA"

Ambrosius Holbein

From a woodcut in the British Museum


Amaurorū vrbs.
Fons Anydri.
Ostium anydri
NOE
Hythlodaeus.

Italian Renaissance, nor had he the same gift of producing the effect of largeness of design within an inch or two of space. His figures, too, are often too short, with the head out of proportion to the body. Yet much of his decorative work has considerable charm, and fulfils its purpose admirably. Some forty woodcuts after his designs, including a number of initial letters, are known, of which it is impossible to attempt any description here.[1] His skill as a designer for glass-painting has been already noted; and among his few drawings are two small roundels, in the Karlsruhe Gallery, of "Pyramus and Thisbe," and "Hercules and Antæus,"[2] which are very pleasing, and in their delicate and somewhat "pretty" handling have great resemblance to a number of the marginal drawings to the *Praise of Folly* which are now given to him.

In painting he was overshadowed by his younger brother. Like Hans, he had inherited a considerable gift for portraiture from his father, as the few works of this nature which remain show very clearly. In his studies for portraits the draughtsmanship is looser and more free than in the corresponding work of the younger Hans in his earlier Basel period, and there is less searching after exact truth of line. His portraits, nevertheless, display an original talent of no mean order, which, had he lived, would have gained for him a place of some distinction among the leading German painters of his day. Such a drawing as the "Anne" is filled with a very tender feeling, and a sympathetic expression of the wistful charm of childhood; and much of the same appreciation of youthful character is to be seen in the portraits of the two small boys in the Basel Gallery, while there is a careful and realistic drawing of the head and body of a baby, supported by the mother's hand, in the British Museum, evidently a study for a Madonna and Child, which is very attractive. It is inscribed "Hans Holbein, 1522," by some later hand, over some earlier signature, now obliterated. According to Dr. Hes, however, it is not by Ambrosius.[3]

The records of Hans Holbein's residence in Lucerne are scanty ones, but such as they are, they extend from 1517 to 1519. Shortly after his arrival he joined the painters' guild, the Brotherhood of

[1] See Woltmann, ii. pp. 205–214; Hes, pp. 27–80, and Pls. vi.–xv.; also Butsch.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 39; Hes, Pl. xxi.
[3] See Hes, p. 148. Reproduced by Vasari Society, No. 17, Pt. i., 1905–6.

St. Luke, which had been formed in 1506. In the book of the confraternity his name is entered as having paid one gulden for admission : "Meister Hanns Holbein hat j gulden gen." Unfortunately the year-date is not given. The original book has disappeared, but a copy exists which was made by Zacharias Bletz, the town registrar, in 1541, but in transcribing it he has omitted the dates which would fix the exact details of Holbein's membership.

His first recorded commission was a badly-paid one. On the Sunday before the feast of Saints Simon and Jude (October 28), 1517, he received one florin nine shillings for a design for a glass window. In the same year, on December 10, an entry in the town records shows him engaged in less reputable occupation. He and a certain Caspar, a goldsmith, were each fined five livres for fighting in the streets. "Item Caspar goldschmid vnnd der Holbein soll jeder 5 ll. buss als sy vber ein andern zuckt hand." This same Caspar, one learns from the town books, was by nature a brawler, for he was in trouble of the same kind on more than one occasion. The punishment in this particular case was heavy, so that the disturbance must have been a serious one, and it has been suggested that on account of it Holbein left Lucerne for a time, in order that the affair might blow over, and that he took the opportunity of paying a visit to Lombardy. It is not likely, however, that he crossed the Alps in the winter.

In one of the rooms of the Hertenstein house, at the time of its demolition early in the last century, there still remained the date 1517 on one of the wall decorations, which suggests that his work in the interior of the mansion was well advanced, if not completed, during that year. The outer walls were still unfinished when Holbein left Lucerne, for what reason is not known, but it does not seem probable that he would have abandoned an important commission for several months merely on account of some small trouble with the town authorities. The visit to Italy, it seems certain, took place in the spring or early summer of 1518, after the decorations of the Hertenstein house had been well advanced. These decorations, as far as can be judged from the few existing remains, show a certain Italian influence, but for the greater part not so strongly that it cannot be accounted for by the teaching of his father, the study of prints and engravings, and other second-hand sources. There is, however, a

drawing in the Basel Gallery, described below, a preliminary study of architectural decoration for the lower part of the façade of the house, which, as Dr. Ganz points out, must have been made after Holbein's return from Italy, for in it this new influence can be seen much more clearly and strongly, just as it can in similar work undertaken by him in Basel a year or two later, after a visit to Lombardy had brought him into personal contact with the works of some of the leading Italian masters in painting and architecture. It is clear, therefore, that the journey over the Alps formed an interlude of some duration between two sojourns in Lucerne, each extending over several months, and that during the second period he completed the Hertenstein wall-paintings.

Lucerne was one of the first towns in Switzerland to feel the influence of the Italian Renaissance, and the fashion, copied from the southern country, of decorating the fronts of its houses with wall-paintings, had been adopted before Holbein worked there. As early as 1435 the Frey family owned a house which was covered with such paintings; a second house with sixteenth-century decorations was demolished in 1871, while others of the same period retained traces of wall-paintings until comparatively modern times. Certain fragments of this early wall-painting still exist, and there has been a revival of the art in Lucerne in recent years. Augsburg was probably the first town outside Italy to adopt this method of house decoration, to which the painters who practised it owed so much of the freedom of their style; but many of the towns immediately to the north of the Alps followed suit in course of time, and modified the architecture of their buildings in order to meet the requirements of the new fashion, abandoning to a certain extent the structural Gothic decorative forms to which they were accustomed, in order to make room for the provision of large flat wall surfaces, broken only by plain rectangular windows and doors, upon which the painters would have free scope for their work. It became the habit, too, among the wealthier of the citizens, to decorate the inner walls of their mansions in the same way.

Jakob von Hertenstein, who, when he gave the commission to Holbein for the painting of his new house, was the chief magistrate of Lucerne, was a member of one of the oldest families in Switzerland. His father, Caspar von Hertenstein, held many important civic and

military offices, and led the Swiss rearguard at the battle of Murten. His son inherited many of his dignities, and was also a notable soldier, and in 1515, in which year he was mayor, commanded the men of Lucerne at the battle of Marignano. His ancestral castle stood on a steep rock on the shore of the lake of Lucerne, near Weggis, and from it the family took its name. Jakob was married four times, in each instance to a lady of a patrician Swiss family, and in the decoration of the façade of his new dwelling, Holbein introduced the coats of arms of all four of them. In 1511 he purchased of Hans Wolf an old wooden house which stood on the Kappelplatz at the corner of a small street leading to the Sternen Platz, near the Corn Market, and in the heart of the city. This house he pulled down, and erected in its place a fine stone mansion, which was finished, and ready for its decorations, by 1517.

It has been suggested that Holbein obtained this commission through the good services of Oswald Molitor, who was a friend of one of Hertenstein's sons ; but, however it may have been gained, it was one of great importance to so young an artist, and he made the most of his opportunities. The house was one of four storeys, and the whole of its frontage he covered with paintings. It was still standing in 1824, with its decorations for the greater part well preserved ; but it was then pulled down, and all that remains of its painted glories is comprised in a number of very inadequate copies of certain portions, a single fragment of one of the original paintings, together with a small study for one of the pictures, and the architectural design already mentioned for part of the ground floor decoration, both from Holbein's own pencil. It is thus to-day almost impossible to obtain any adequate impression of the actual effect of the painter's earliest undertaking of importance, as it was in the days of its first freshness and beauty.

The ground floor was left undecorated, with the exception of the painting of certain architectural details, and on the floor above, which had numerous windows of varying sizes, and little wall space, Holbein's work was confined to three single female figures, one at each corner, and one between the windows in the middle. Immediately over the windows on the left, which were irregular in arrangement, the decoration consisted of ornaments and figures adapted to fit the window crowns ; and on the right, where the windows were con-

siderably higher and stood in a straight line, a long frieze of fighting children was introduced. All these decorations were painted in grisaille, but between the two groups was a larger picture in colours, the upper part of which extended to the floor above. This picture was so arranged that its framework had the appearance of a large projecting bay, semicircular in shape, with an arched opening supported by pillars, through which a view was obtained of what appeared to be a large inner chamber of the house. Within this room Holbein depicted a story from the *Gesta Romanorum,* the one which tells of the old king who tested the love of his three sons and their right to succeed him by offering his dead body as a target to their arrows. This picture was still in a fairly good condition at the time of the destruction of the house, so that from the copy then made it is possible to gain an idea of the artist's conception of the scene. He represented the white-haired monarch, death-pale in face, still seated upright on his throne, though his heart has ceased to beat. Two of the sons have shot their arrows, and one points to the cruel wound he has made, and claims the crown ; but the third, rather than aim at such a target, breaks his bow in indignation, and is acclaimed the victor by the assembled courtiers. On the third storey, between the windows, were placed the coats of arms of Hertenstein and his four wives, within arched openings with hanging wreaths.

Between the windows of the third storey and those of the floor above it, there ran a long triumphal procession from right to left, broken up into groups by pilasters placed at intervals, giving the effect of an open arcading through which the passing show was seen. This design was borrowed in its main details and arrangement from Andrea Mantegna's engraved "Triumph of Caesar." In this he followed his original so closely as to clothe the figures in antique costumes, whereas in the pictures drawn from classical sources painted on other parts of the building, he made use of the costumes of his own day. On the topmost storey five pictures were placed between the windows reaching up to the cornice of the roof. These, too, were chosen from classical literature, apparently for the purpose of providing moral lessons, not only for the members of Hertenstein's own family, but for all the citizens of Lucerne who paused to admire their mayor's new residence. They included the stories of the

treacherous schoolmaster who attempted to betray the town of Falerii to Camillus, Tarquin and Lucretia, the self-sacrifice of Marcus Curtius, Mucius Scævola before Porsenna, and Leæna, who bit off her tongue rather than betray her lover Aristogiton to the judges after the murder of Hipparchus.

The only original study for these painted stories now remaining is the one for the last-named subject, which is preserved in the Basel Gallery (Pl. 23 (1)).[1] It is a washed monochrome drawing, in which Leæna, in the costume of Holbein's own day, stands before her two judges, her hand lifted to her tongue in sign of her determination to keep silence. The story is told with the aid of but few figures. A gaoler stands near Leæna, and behind the two judges are two other seated men. The scene takes place in a vaulted hall with open archways at the back, and has been cleverly arranged to fill in the irregular spaces between the brackets supporting the cornice. This study is of great interest, as it marks a great advance in Holbein's power of drawing the human figure when compared with the schoolmaster's sign-board of the previous year, and shows much greater freedom of draughtsmanship. The heads of one or two of the figures still retain something of the grotesqueness of type which characterises those of the early Passion series of pictures, but the figure of Leæna is a graceful one, and the judge in the centre, in a furred robe and cap, with one finger lifted in admonition and a rod of justice or sword grasped in his left hand, is natural and dignified. The only fragment of the actual wall-painting itself which now remains is a small portion of the Tarquin and Lucretia fresco,[2] showing the latter's hand grasping the dagger, the figure of her husband before whom she is about to kill herself, the right arm of a woman attendant who stands behind her, and part of the architectural background. This fragment was built into the wall of the house which replaced the older one, and can still be seen on the upper floor of the façade. It is insignificant enough in itself, and has greatly darkened with age and exposure, but it is of value as the only actual evidence of the broad and vigorous manner in which the whole façade was painted.[3]

A second original drawing by Holbein in the Basel Gallery is

[1] Woltmann, 103. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 40; and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 4; and *Holbein*, p. 154.

[2] Woltmann, 216. [3] Woltmann, i. p. 143. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 16.

Vol. I. Plate 11

DESIGNS FOR THE MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE KELLY MEDICAL HOUSE

1. Design and the Perspective Description of the Central Door

Bush Garter

DESIGNS FOR THE WALL-PAINTINGS OF THE HERTENSTEIN HOUSE

1. Leaena and the Judges 2. Architectural Decoration of the Ground Floor

BASEL GALLERY



I



2

a study for a part of the ground-floor façade of this house (Pl. 23 (2)).[1] It is a pen and wash drawing slightly touched with colour. Groups of pillars support a frieze with flat carving in the Gothic manner. Above the pointed doorway on the left he has thrown a circular arch, round which the pattern of the frieze is continued, filled in with grotesque sculptured figures supporting a tablet for a date. On the right he has placed an open loggia, to which a flight of stone steps descends, with square pillars, inlaid with marble panels, on either side supporting a wide, flattened arch richly ornamented. The space over the frieze on the right is filled in with a procession of naked boys, some dragged along by their comrades, and others carried on litters, and above this again, hanging garlands of leaves with swinging putti, one blowing a trumpet. According to Dr. Ganz, this last motive, as well as other parts of the architectural design, are reminiscent of details to be seen in the cloisters and on the façade of the Certosa of Pavia, and suggest that Holbein must have taken them directly from that building.[2] If this be so, it proves that a part at least of the wall decoration of the Hertenstein house was not finished until after Holbein's visit to Lombardy.

It seems certain that Holbein began his work in the interior of the house, and that he covered the walls of at least five rooms, chiefly on the third floor, with paintings. In 1825 many of them still remained in an excellent state of preservation. In contradistinction to those on the outer walls, they consisted of religious pictures, and scenes from ancient fables and from everyday life in which humour found a prominent place. The sacred decorations were in a large hall which served as the family chapel. One of them represented the legend of the fourteen saints who are said to have appeared to a shepherd in 1445 at a church in the neighbourhood of Bamberg. Holbein depicted them in an elaborate landscape, with mountains and a church in the background, grouped on their knees round the Infant Christ, with the shepherd, a striking figure, kneeling in adoration with his sheep round him. A second picture in this room contained portraits of Hertenstein, his wife, and three sons, very diminutive figures, kneeling before seven saints, among them

[1] Woltmann, 53. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 3; and in *Holbein*, p. 154; the left-hand half by His, *Dessins d'Ornaments de Hans Holbein*, Pl. ii.

[2] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to ii. 3.

St. Benedictus, the patron saint of Lucerne. A third picture showed a religious procession, with a bishop and other ecclesiastics, headed by banners, issuing from the walls of a town in a hilly country. In the large hall of the house, on the third floor, which at the time of the demolition was still in its original state, were a number of landscapes with hunting scenes, in one of which, a stag-hunt, the ancient castle of the Hertensteins on a hill by the lake of Lucerne was introduced. In these scenes portraits of the chief magistrate and members of his family were included. In one of them Hertenstein, his fourth wife, and two sons, Benedikt and Leodegar, all mounted, are hunting wild ducks by the side of the lake, accompanied by dogs. Husband and wife appear again in the painting representing a stag-hunt in the woodland below the castle at Weggis. In a third scene hares are being hunted with a pack of hounds over hilly country. Near the fireplace was a representation of a subject which was popular with German painters—the Fountain of Youth. In this a certain amount of latitude was permitted, and Holbein depicted some of the incidents with a rough, unrefined humour. Nude men and women are sitting crowded together in a small circular fountain, some still old, others already rejuvenated by its waters. In the centre of the basin rises a pillar with a banner bearing the arms of Hertenstein and his fourth wife. From all sides old people come crowding and hurrying up, some in carts, some on donkeys, one pushed in a wheelbarrow, and others carried in litters or on the backs of less feeble seekers after perpetual youth. In one instance an ugly old woman, seated in a basket slung on the back of a sturdy young man, holds in her arms an equally old and ugly dog, in order that it, too, may benefit from the bath. A second painting next to it continued the story. Other old men and women are crowded into a long cart drawn by four horses, into the back of which a lame man has scrambled, while a second limps painfully after it. In other rooms the decorations were so dilapidated and damaged that it was impossible to make copies of them; but they included battle scenes, and various Renaissance ornaments and devices. In one of these latter rooms occurred the date 1517 under the family shield.[1] In one of the chambers was a

[1] For completer details, see Th. von Liebenau, *Hans Holbeins d. J. Fresken am Hertenstein Hause in Luzern*, 1888; P. Ganz, "Hans Holbeins Italienfahrt," in *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, 1909, vol. vi. p 596.

wooden pillar, carved with the likeness of Heini von Uri, court fool of Duke Leopold of Austria, for which Holbein appears to have supplied the design from which the carver worked. Hollar made an etching from this drawing, or from a woodcut of it, as he has inscribed it, "H. Holbein incidit in lignum," when it was in the Arundel Collection, in 1647.[1]

In carrying out this monumental work, Holbein, in addition to possible help from his brother, must have employed more than one assistant. He made, no doubt, designs for every part of it, and painted the principal pictures himself, but much of the remainder was very probably done by others under his personal direction. North of the Alps such work was not particularly well paid, nor was great care displayed in carrying it out. Both artist and employer were satisfied if a good decorative effect in design and colour was produced; the former, considering the large amount of surface to be covered, could not waste much time over the careful painting of details, nor was the latter prepared to pay more than a very moderate price for it. There is no doubt, however, that Holbein's work in this field was far in advance of anything hitherto carried out in Switzerland, more particularly in the elaborate architectural settings in which he placed his wall pictures, and in the use made of perspective, so that the scenes depicted appeared to be taking place within the rooms of the house itself, and the eye was deceived into supposing that a building of somewhat plain design was in reality a mansion erected in the richest style of the Italian Renaissance.

In 1825 the Hertenstein house came into the possession of a Lucerne banker named Knörr, who pulled it down in order to replace it by a more modern building. In spite of the efforts of a few art-lovers, this work of demolition was carried out, and the town authorities made no attempt to stop such an act of vandalism, or to save the only surviving record they possessed of the art of by far the greatest artist their walls had ever sheltered—a record which to-day would be rightly regarded as one of their greatest treasures. It was only through the efforts of Colonel May von Büren and Colonel Karl Pfyffer von Altishofen, who employed certain local artists to make copies of the frescoes before the house was finally destroyed, that any record at all of the decorations remains. Time and the

[1] Parthey, 1548. Woltmann, ii. p. 166, who doubts that the original was by Holbein.

damp climate had so dimmed them, however, that it was found necessary to wash them down with the town's fire-engine before they could be seen clearly enough for the artists to copy them. The copies, which were made by the Lucerne painters Schwegler, Ulrich von Eschenbach, Eglin, Marzohl, and an Italian, Trolli von Lavena, had to be hurriedly done, and they naturally possess little or nothing of the combined delicacy and force of the originals. Much of the purely decorative work, the scroll and wreath ornament, and details in the Renaissance style, in the use of which Holbein was to become so great a master, had to be left uncopied, attention being concentrated on the pictures and figure subjects. Still, what was done was sufficient to show something of the ideas Holbein brought to the undertaking, the influences he came under in his choice of subjects, and the methods he employed in carrying them out. Colonel May persuaded Usteri, the painter and poet, to visit Lucerne in order to give his opinion as to the value of the paintings, but he was unable to do so until 1825, when the demolition had already begun. Usteri directed the making of the copies, and saw to it that the artists adhered as faithfully as possible to the originals. No "restoration" was permitted; those parts which had perished were left blank in the copies. The latter were made with the view of publication, but they proved too inadequate, and the scheme was dropped. In 1851 they were presented by Colonel May to the town library of Lucerne, together with Usteri's letters concerning them.[1]

Before turning to Holbein's journey across the Alps in 1518, reference must be made to a portrait painted by him during his first residence in Lucerne, which is the only one by him so far discovered bearing the date 1517. This work, of considerable importance to the student making a careful study of Holbein's early development, is a likeness of Benedikt von Hertenstein, one of the sons of his new patron, who was twenty-two years of age at the time of the sitting. He was a member of the Council in the year he was painted, and was slain at the battle of Bicocca in 1522. This portrait was acquired from a private collection in England in 1906 for the Metropolitan Museum of New York (Pl. 24).[2] He is represented standing, facing the

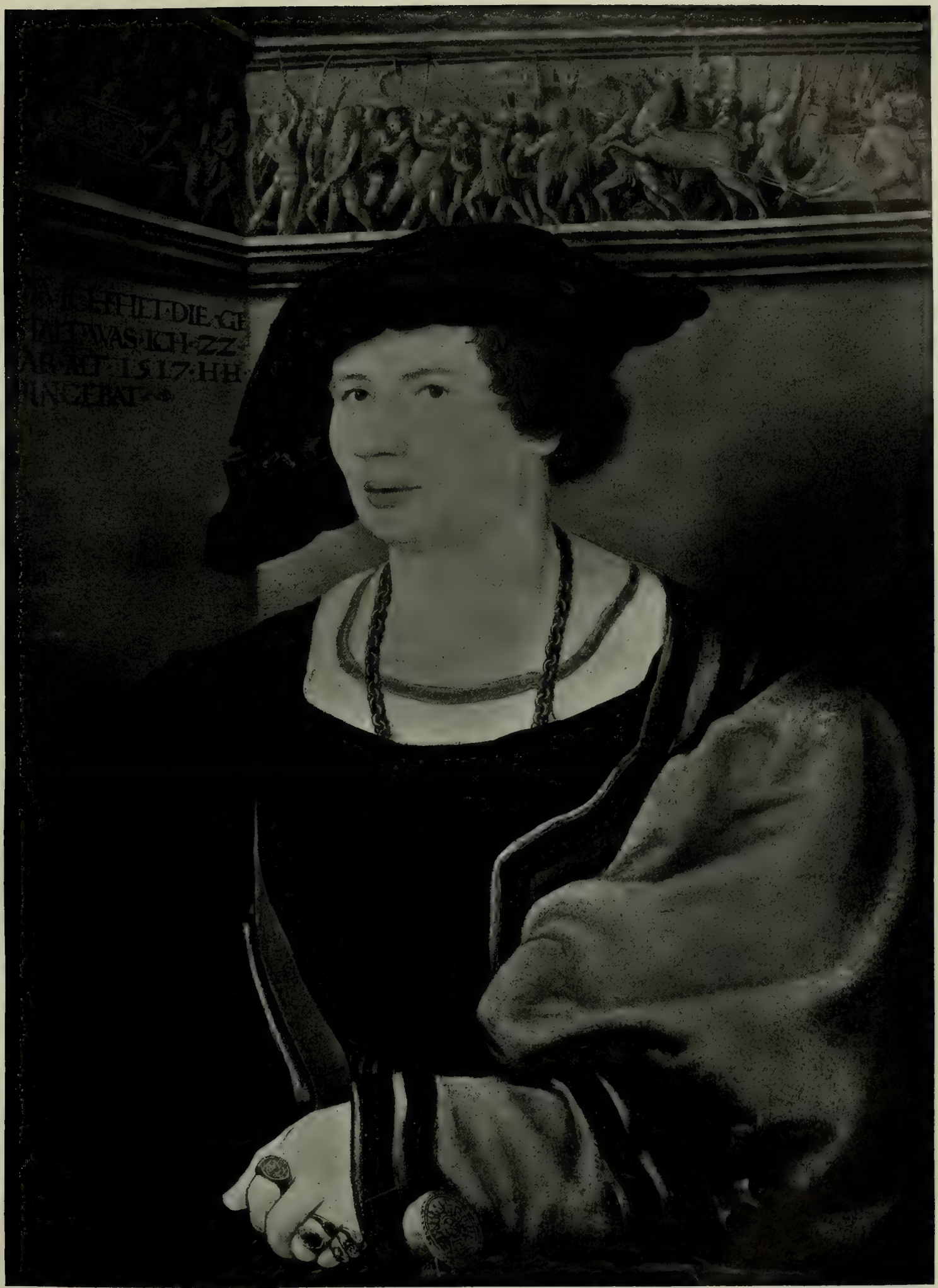
[1] Eight of them reproduced by Ganz, together with a reconstruction of the façade by A. Landerer, in *Holbein*, pp. 153–158.

[2] Reproduced in the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of New York*, vol. i. No. 12 (Nov. 1906); *Burlington Magazine*, Oct. 1906, p. 53; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 15.

BENEDIKT VON HERTENSTEIN

1517

Metropolitan Museum, New York



spectator, with his left hand resting on the pommel of his sword. He wears a black under-dress and a white shirt with an embroidered edge. His cloak or overcoat with wide upper sleeves is of crimson, trimmed with dark green bands, and lined with bright myrtle-green silk. His left hand is half hidden by the sleeve and the right arm hangs down, the hand not being shown. His cap is of black and scarlet velvet with gold tags, and a plain chain of gold links hangs from his neck. He wears six rings on his left hand, the one on his first finger being a signet ring with a coat of arms now almost illegible. The pommel of his sword is of gold and silver ornamented with a design in imitation of Cufic script in the fashion of Italian goldsmith's work of the period. His bushy hair almost hides the ears, and his eyes are small and bright. The background, as in the Meyer portraits, is a study in perspective, for Holbein has placed him within the angle of a wall, along the two sides of which, over the sitter's head, runs a stone frieze carved with a representation of a Roman triumph, crowded with small figures, in which the victor is seated in a chariot drawn by prancing horses, and in front of him, among the soldiers and trumpeters, a number of prisoners led captive. It has suffered rather severely from repainting. The design, an imitation of an antique bas-relief, was no doubt based upon Mantegna's "Triumph," which Holbein was at the same time adapting for the façade of the Hertenstein house. A somewhat similar design, though later in date, is to be seen on the drawing of a dagger sheath in the Basel Gallery (Vol. ii., Pl. 46 (2)).[1] The wall on the left is in shadow, and on it, immediately below the frieze, is inscribed: "DA · ICH · HET · DIE · GESTALT · WAS · ICH · 22 · JAR · ALT · 1517 · H · H · PINGEBAT." This inscription is interesting as the only one in German to be found on any one of his portraits, with the exception of that of Fallen at Brunswick, and the addresses on the letters in some of the other Steelyard portraits.

The picture is painted in oils on paper, and afterwards mounted on a panel, a method not infrequently employed by Holbein in his earlier practice. The technical skill displayed in it is already of a high order, though the draughtsmanship is still a little laboured, and lacking in that ease and certainty to which he afterwards attained, while the flesh tints are paler and flatter than in his later work. It shows, nevertheless, a distinct advance when compared with the

[1] Woltmann, 58. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 41 (*a*).

Meyer portraits of the preceding year. The draughtsmanship is firmer, the colour tones softer, and the general effect produced is one of greater naturalness, though still far behind the "Bonifacius Amerbach," painted two years later, in subtlety of line and harmony of colour. When the picture was purchased in 1906 the name of the sitter was unknown, and beyond the fact that at the beginning of the last century it was in the possession of the Burckhardt family, its history has not been traced; but by means of the coat of arms on the ring it was identified three years later as Benedikt von Hertenstein.[1] In 1826 Ulrich Hegner saw in Lucerne a portrait of his father, Jakob von Hertenstein, of the same date, 1517, still in the possession of one of his descendants, which he considered to be an original work by Holbein, which would indicate that the artist, in addition to including portraits of various members of the family in the wall-paintings in the interior of the house, was also commissioned to paint individual portraits of more than one of them. The portrait seen by Hegner has now disappeared, but others of Hertenstein still remain in the Town Hall and the Library of Lucerne. These, however, are not contemporary likenesses, but later copies, possibly after an original by Holbein now lost.

The great likelihood—indeed, the certainty—that Holbein, before these wall-paintings were finally completed, paid, during 1518, a short visit to Italy, is now generally acknowledged by most writers. It is true that Carel van Mander distinctly states that "Hans Holbein never travelled in Italy," and the artist's earliest biographer was, no doubt, correct, if his words are to be understood as meaning that Holbein never made any long sojourn in that country, or studied for a considerable period under some Italian painter. This statement, however, in no way precludes a visit of several months' duration to Lombardy, of which Van Mander was ignorant. From Lucerne the journey to the foot of the Alps was only a matter of a few days, while traces of his presence in Altorf, which is on the route to the St. Gotthard Pass, still remain. From Altorf the Italian side of the mountains could be easily reached. The influence of both Mantegna and Leonardo and the Milanese school of painting is unmistakable in certain of his pictures, and though some of this may have been due to earlier influences in his Augsburg days, received through Hans Burgkmair

[1] See *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, 1909, p. 599.

and other German painters who had worked in Italy, and to the study of engravings, they are not strong enough to account satisfactorily for the very marked Italian influence to be seen in such pictures as the early "Last Supper," or the "Venus" and "Lais Corinthiaca" of 1526. The indications of personal acquaintance with Italian painting and architecture are even more strongly marked in numerous designs for glass paintings, dealt with in a later chapter.[1] It is therefore assumed that he crossed the Alps and penetrated into the country at least as far as Milan and its neighbourhood. Indeed, the careful researches of Dr. Ganz have removed all doubts on the question.

The "Last Supper" in the Basel Gallery (No. 316) (Pl. 25),[2] which must not be confounded with the still earlier version of the same subject on canvas already described,[3] although badly damaged, bears in its composition so striking a reminiscence of Leonardo's celebrated fresco in the refectory of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, that it appears almost certain that Holbein must have seen it. This panel painting, apparently the central part of a triptych, when it came into the possession of Amerbach was already in a badly-damaged state, due, no doubt, to injuries received during the religious disturbances of 1529, which finally helped to drive Holbein for a second time from Basel. It had been cut in two, and then roughly joined together, while a piece was missing from either side, so that to-day only nine apostles remain, though the hands and feet and parts of the bodies of the others are still to be seen at the sides. It is described in the Amerbach inventory as "ein nachtmal vf holtz mit olfarb H. Holbein. Ist zerhöwen vnd wider zusammengeleimbt aber unfletig." In 1750 it was again reset by Nikolaus Grooth, who repainted and restored it in a hard and crude fashion, so that it is now very difficult to form any adequate idea of the original scheme of colour, though the heads still retain something of their original vigour and expression. The scene is set in a loggia of plain Renaissance architecture, the blue sky seen through its arched openings, against which branches of fig or vine stand out, and a distant tower on the right. Christ, seated in the centre of the table, with hands spread out before him, is depicted at the moment when he exclaims,

[1] See pp. 140–3, 150, &c.
[2] Woltmann, 16. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 19; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 55.
[3] See p. 40.

"One of you shall betray me." This figure, both in the expressive gesture of the hands, the position of the body, and the type of features, follows closely the greater figure which evidently inspired it. The group of St. John, St. Peter, and Judas is also based on the corresponding group in Leonardo's fresco. The youthful St. John, seated next to the Saviour, and turning round to listen to St. Peter, who stands behind him with his hand resting on St. John's shoulder, is admirably conceived and full of character. Judas, seated in front on the left, rests his chin on his left hand, his strongly marked, almost grotesque, face, convulsed with conflicting passions, and his right hand pressed against the seat as though he were about to spring up and rush from the table. The picture, in spite of the damage it has received, shows a great advance upon the earlier "Last Supper," both in power of expression and technical execution. In its style of painting it has considerable affinity with the "Noli Me Tangere" in Hampton Court, more particularly with the distant figures of St. John and St. Peter in the last-named picture, while the head of St. James, seen in profile, bears a close resemblance to that of the Risen Christ. The background, too, displays a decided Italian influence.[1]

Still stronger evidence of this journey to Lombardy is to be found in Holbein's numerous designs for painted glass,[2] which he produced during the next six or seven years, designs which, in most cases, are filled round the borders and in the backgrounds with rich and elaborate architecture based upon Renaissance models. It is difficult to understand how he could have produced so much work of this nature, so filled with the beauty and dignity of the style upon which it was founded, had he not had at least some personal acquaintance with the original examples upon the far side of the Alps, which these drawings of his so often suggest. A close comparison of certain of these studies with the architectural details of some of the splendid Renaissance buildings which he must have seen if this journey across the plains of Lombardy did in reality take place, makes it almost certain, although there are no documentary proofs, that he made drawings and sketches of some of the principal edifices of Milan, the façade and interior of the Certosa of Pavia, the monumental tombs

[1] According to Dr. Ganz, the architectural motives are derived from the loggia of the Cathedral of Como. See *Holbein*, p. 236.

[2] See chapter vii.

THE LAST SUPPER

Central Panel of a Triptych

BASEL GALLERY



of architectural design which are to be met with throughout Northern Italy, and such cathedral churches as those of Como and Lugano ;[1] and that he must have studied also the use made by the Italian painters of similar architectural features in the backgrounds of their frescoes and paintings. It is difficult to believe that his intimate knowledge of the true principles of that style were gained merely by the study of a few engravings or isolated pictures. Here and there, too, in those glass designs in which the background is a landscape, there is more than one Alpine scene. In the one with the figure of a Pope or Bishop, in the Basel Gallery (No. 334),[2] there is a view of the old Devil's Bridge on the Andermatt route, and the same bridge is to be seen in the " Table of Cebes " woodcut. There is a view of the Rigi in the background of the woodcut of " Jacob's Ladder " in Thomas Wolff's edition of the Pentateuch, 1523, and, again, a representation of Lucerne in the woodcut of the " New Jerusalem," in the same publisher's edition of the New Testament, 1523 (Pl. 70 (3)).[3]

In the course of his journey to and from Lombardy he probably made short halts in more than one Swiss town. Hegner mentions pictures by him in Coutrai, Zürich, Altorf, and Berne, but the works he enumerates, with the exception of the painted table at Zürich, are not the work of Holbein. There are, however, indications that he spent some time in Altorf, in the canton Uri, from which district it has been suggested that his family originally came, for the Holbein arms are almost identical with those of that canton. In the church is a " Head of Christ," which local tradition gives to Holbein, and in the Convent of the Capuchins still hangs a copy of the " Christ in the Tomb " of the Basel Gallery. The " Head of Christ " has suffered so severely that it is impossible to-day to say whether it is from his hand ; the church archives, which are said to have contained proofs of its authenticity, were lost in a fire which occurred in 1799, and did a great amount of damage, destroying, among other things, an altar-piece of the " Crucifixion," attributed to Holbein, painted on canvas, one of the chief treasures of the church. The version of the " Christ in the Tomb " in the monastery shows material differences from the original at Basel. The body of Christ is no longer rigid in death.

[1] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, notes to ii. 3, 51, iii. 9, 35 ; *Holbein*, pp. xvi.–xviii.

[2] Woltmann, 83, who calls the figure St. Pantalus. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 35.

[3] For further proofs, see Appendix (B).

He has conquered it, and the artist, whoever he may have been, has represented him as the giver of eternal life, by means of rays of light which emanate from the recumbent body. Above the figure is a medallion with the Burial, which bears little likeness to Holbein's work. M. Pierre Gauthiez suggests that this Christ was painted by Holbein when under the immediate influence of certain Lombard painters, but that it became so badly damaged in course of time that it was restored and repainted by some not very skilful worker.[1]

Wherever Holbein may have wandered in search of work, he was back again in Lucerne early in 1519. The town books contain records of payments made to him for the painting of certain banners and pennons in the spring of that year. It was a custom of the Lucernois to plant banners on the gables and summits of their street fountains, as a signal for assembly whenever there was question of war; and, in addition to this custom, small flags of painted cloth were usually to be seen hanging in such places.[2] On the 19th February 1519, Holbein was paid twelve schillings for two flags of this kind, which were hung near the cathedral, and on the 21st May of the same year he received one livre, one schilling, six heller for banners for the fountain near the convent of the Franciscans. It was round this fountain of the Cordeliers that the shoemakers and sellers of various merchandise had their stalls, and the neighbouring street was the quarter of the glass painters. For these latter craftsmen Holbein made several designs. There is one of these in the Basel Gallery (No. 354), which, however, is not from Holbein's own hand, but merely a good workshop copy. It represents the standing figure of the Virgin with the Child in her arms, under an arch with hanging garlands, supported by pillars and pilasters with Renaissance ornament in low relief, and appears to have been drawn in Lucerne, for the background consists of an admirable little landscape study with a view of the towers and roofs and the old covered bridge of that city, and cloud-capped mountains in the background.[3] It was, however, designed for some citizen of Basel, and may, therefore, have been done after he had left Lucerne, and the background sketched in from memory. It

[1] Gauthiez, *Holbein*, p. 52, and the same writer's "Holbein sur la route d'Italie," in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, Dec. 1897, Feb. 1898.

[2] One is to be seen in the "Fountain of Youth" decoration for the Hertenstein house.

[3] Woltmann, 29. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 53.

forms the left-hand half of a double window containing the patron saints of Basel, of which the right-hand half still exists in the original glass in the cloisters of Wettingen, representing the Emperor Heinrich II holding a model of the minster, and with a shield containing the arms of Basel at his feet. In its architectural details this window agrees with the "Virgin and Child" drawing in the Amerbach Collection, which is in pen and wash and lightly coloured.

A second window design, also in the Amerbach Collection, dated 1518, and signed "H.H.," represents the arms of State-councillor Holdermeier of Lucerne.[1] Under an open archway with pillars inlaid with marble stand three peasants with grotesque head-dresses, busily talking, conceived by the artist with considerable humour. One rests on his scythe, another carries a sack over his shoulder, while the one in the middle holds a basket of eggs. Over the centre of the arch is a small tablet with the date, and on either side of it, in the spandrils, peasants are shown at work in the fields, mowing and reaping. In the centre foreground is placed a shield with the Holdermeier arms. A third design for painted glass of this period with the arms of Hans Fleckenstein of Lucerne, and dated 1517, is in the Brunswick Gallery, and was lent to the Holbein Exhibition in Basel in 1897–8.[2]

Two other existing designs appear to belong to Holbein's Lucerne period. The first is the very beautiful drawing in the Basel Gallery of the Archangel Michael as the Weigher of Souls (Pl. 26).[3] It is evidently a drawing for a wooden statue. The Archangel Michael as the Soul Weigher was the patron saint of the cloisters of Beromünster, near Lucerne, and most probably, according to Dr. Ganz, this design was a commission from Holbein's patrons, Peter and Jakob von Hertenstein. Jakob was feoffee of the cloisters, and Peter, canon of Basel, was from 1483 until his death in 1519 also canon of the minster. He had his own private chapel, to which he presented various works of art, including a window of painted glass with a representation of the Archangel, which is now in the Lucerne Museum.[4] The winged figure of the youthful saint stands erect upon a slight carved bracket, raising

[1] Woltmann, 107. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 34.

[2] For two others, see Appendix (B).

[3] Woltmann, 99. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 10; and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 5; Knackfuss, fig. 27.

[4] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 10.

a great sword over his head with one hand, and with the other holding a large pair of scales just clear of the ground, in one of which is Satan, with wings and a long curled tail, and in the other a naked child with a nimbus, representing the soul. St. Michael, too, wears a nimbus above his masses of curled hair, and gazes down with a smile on the upturned face of the Evil One, whom he is about to strike with his sword. He is clad in clinging drapery, which leaves one leg bare, and a breastplate richly chased with a Renaissance flower-and-leaf design, a long cloak falling from his shoulders to the ground. The figure displays extraordinary grace and energy, and in the beauty of its conception and its draughtsmanship recalls the best work of the Italian painters, and was evidently accomplished immediately after his return from Lombardy, when the stimulus of that journey was still at its highest and strongest.

The second drawing, in Indian ink, with pen and bistre outlines, in the British Museum (No. 14), is a round composition nearly nine inches in diameter, representing miners at work on the face of a mountain side (Pl. 27).[1] In the foreground is a rocky platform on which two men are driving wedges into the rock with hammers with long pliant handles. Others are working with smaller hammers, and one, with a lantern fastened to his cap, is mounting to the platform by a ladder. Above them another man is ascending in the same way to a higher part of the quarry, while from an opening on the right a miner is pushing a truck full of ore along a wooden bridge, and another, down below, is raking the stone into a tray. Various wooden huts are placed here and there on the ledges. According to Dr. E. His, this drawing was in Basel in the sixteenth century, and was then copied by an unknown artist as an illustration to a manuscript book on mining by Andreas Ryff. It was probably made by Holbein in the neighbourhood of the St. Gotthard Pass, on his way to or from Lombardy.

Patin mentions five pictures painted by Holbein which in his day were in the church of the Augustines in Lucerne—a "Nativity," the "Adoration of the Kings," "Christ disputing with the Doctors," a "Sancta Veronica," and a "Taking down from the Cross,"[2] but

[1] Reproduced by His, *Jahrbuch der Kgl. Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1894, p. 208.

[2] *Index Operum Holbenii*, appendix to *Moriæ Encomium*, 1676, Nos. 47–51. Walpole, *Anecdotes*, ed. Wornum, p. 77.

THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AS WEIGHER OF SOULS

Drawing in Indian ink

Basel Gallery





MINERS AT WORK

Drawing in Indian ink, pen, and bistre

BRITISH MUSEUM



Hegner could find no traces of them. They probably formed a triptych. M. Gauthiez suggests that these pictures were the result of his study of the paintings of the Lombard masters, the titles alone suggesting a list of works by Luini.[1]

The last-named of these pictures, the "Taking down from the Cross"—in which, according to Patin's description, Christ's body was on the ground, the head resting on the Virgin's lap, and surrounded by Mary Magdalene, Saint John, Nicodemus, and other persons, with the two thieves still on the Cross—was still in the church in the middle of the seventeenth century. Two sketches exist, with notes as to the colour, and an inscription stating that they were drawn in Lucerne from Holbein's altar-piece in the church of the Augustines by C. Meyer in 1648. Dr. Ganz has recently published a copy of this picture,[2] which is in Palermo, and draws attention to the fact that it agrees in dimensions with the lost original, which was in the possession of the painter Marquard Wocher in Basel in 1834, at which time it was copied by the painter Hieronymus Hess. Another copy, half the size of the original, was exhibited at the Exhibition of Early German Art at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1906, and a third is still in the sacristy of one of the Lucerne churches. In addition, there is a drawing of the group of the two chief figures, Christ and the Virgin, in the Basel Gallery,[3] a free copy of the central group of Christ and the Virgin, signed H. H. W. and H. H. It was done towards the end of the sixteenth century either by Hans Jörg Wannewetsch of Basel, or Hans Heinrich Wegmann of Lucerne.

[1] Gauthiez, p. 56.
[2] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 187, and note upon it, p. 249, from which this information is taken.
[3] Reproduced in *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 45, with note by Meyenburg.

CHAPTER V

CITIZEN OF BASEL

Holbein's return to Basel—Enters the Painters' Guild "zum Himmel"—Becomes a burgher—His marriage—Portrait of Bonifacius Amerbach—The Amerbach Collection—Church pictures—The "Nativity" and "Adoration of the Kings" at Freiburg—Hans Oberried—The altar-piece of the "Passion of Christ" at Basel—Italian influences in his work—The "Noli Me Tangere" at Hampton Court—"Christ as the Man of Sorrows" and "Mary as Mater Dolorosa"—Designs for sacred pictures or wall-paintings—The "Dead Christ in the Tomb"—The Solothurn Madonna—History of the picture—"St. Ursula" and "St. George" at Karlsruhe—The organ doors of Basel Cathedral.



N the summer or autumn of 1519 Holbein was back again in Basel. His return may have been due to lack of sufficient employment in Lucerne, or it may be that he was recalled by news of the death of his brother Ambrosius. As already pointed out, no traces of the latter can be found after this year, and it is generally supposed that he died about this time. If such were the case, it is natural that Hans should return, in order to wind up his brother's affairs, and it may be, to complete any commissions he may have left unfinished. Slight indications, also, of a visit to his father, who was then working in Isenheim, not far from Basel, are perhaps afforded by his designs for painted glass at Murbach and Andlau, described in a later chapter, which he produced in the following year.[1] He now made Basel his permanent residence, and from that time until he came to England, seven years later, he was very busily employed in painting portraits, altar-pieces for churches, decorating house fronts and interiors, and supplying designs for book illustrations, and for the glass-painters, armourers, and metal-workers of his adopted city.

On September 25, 1519, he became a member of the Painters' Guild, the "Zunft zum Himmel." The entry runs: "Item, Hans Holbein the painter has been received into the Guild on Sunday before St. Michael's Day, in the year 1519, and has sworn to preserve the statutes of the Guild like every other Guild brother of the painters."

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xviii.

("Item es hat die Zunfft entffangen Hans Holbein der moller vff suntag vor sant michelss Dag im XVCXIX jor vnd hat geschworen Der Zunft ordnung zu halten wie ein ander Zunfftbruder der moller."[1] His coat of arms,[2] a black bull's head with ringed nose, on a yellow or gold ground, surmounted by a red star between the horns, and with "Hans Holbein de maller" inscribed above it, painted at the time he was admitted a member, remained in the Guild Chamber until modern times, and is now in the Basel Historical Museum. The entrance fee was one pound three shillings. He soon appears to have become an important member of the confraternity, for in the following year, on June 25, 1520, he was elected chamber-master of the Guild, as set forth in the treasurer's book. A few days afterwards, on July 3, 1520, he obtained the rights of citizenship; probably a residence of twelve months was necessary before the freedom of the city could be obtained, and Holbein had now been back in Basel for about a year. The entry in the town book runs as follows:— "Item, Tuesday before St. Ulrich's Day anno 20 Hans Holbein of Augsburg, painter, has received the right of citizenship, and has sworn in the customary manner." ("Item Zinstag vor Vlrici anno XX Ist Hans Holbeinen von Augspurg dem maler das burgrecht glichenn. Et juravit pro ut moris est.")[3] Less than a month afterwards his name occurs, on the 1st of August 1520, in the records of the Court of Justice. The wife of the painter Michel Schuman sued him for a debt of eight pounds, which he was condemned to pay, a proceeding recalling similar monetary difficulties in his father's life.

It was probably about the same time that Holbein married Elsbeth Schmid, the widow of a tanner, with one son named Franz, who afterwards followed the occupation of his father. It appears possible, therefore, that she may have been possessed of some means, and that she carried on the tannery business until her son was of age. Perhaps both marriage and citizenship were necessary qualifications for membership of the Guild "zum Himmel," as was the case with other guilds elsewhere, and some such regulation may have been one of the chief causes which brought about Holbein's early marriage. In Breslau, for instance, a painter who wished to settle in the town as a master was obliged to be married, or if not, must have taken a wife

[1] Woltmann, i. 145.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xl.
[3] Woltmann, i. 145.

within a year and a day of his entry into the Guild, under a penalty of ten marks.[1] Additional proof that the marriage must have taken place in 1520 or 1521 is afforded by the Solothurn "Madonna," dated 1522, for which Holbein's wife and infant son served as the models for the Virgin and Child.

A few weeks after his admittance into the Guild, Holbein finished one of the most beautiful portraits of his Basel period—that of Bonifacius Amerbach, to whose unfailing admiration of Holbein's art the present fine collection of his works in the Basel Gallery is due. Bonifacius was the youngest of the three sons of Hans Amerbach, the scholar, and afterwards printer and publisher, who, born in Reutlingen, settled in Basel in 1484, where he set up a printing-press which soon became famous, and attracted a number of learned men, who assisted him in preparing books and translations for publication, which included several fine editions of the early Fathers. His three sons were all brilliant scholars. Bonifacius, born in 1492, was about five years older than Holbein. His education was a very thorough one, and while pursuing his studies he was closely associated with various scholars of an older generation than his own, such as Conrad Leontorius, Gebwiler, Beatus Rhenanus, and the Franciscan monk, Johann Conon of Nuremburg, under whom he studied Greek. Later on he went to the University of Freiburg, where he lived with Ulrich Zasius, who was both his teacher and friend. He afterwards continued the study of the law at Avignon under Alciat, and at Montpellier, and in 1525 received the appointment of professor of law in the Basel University. He became a close friend of Erasmus, hardly a day passing without some intercourse between them. The elder scholar, who had the highest admiration for his abilities and learning, grew to regard him almost as a son, and appointed him his heir. Contemporary references to him speak not only of his great scholastic gifts, but of the modesty and amiability of his character, his integrity, his lively wit, and his talent for music and poetry. One such reference, quoted by Hegner,[2] speaks of him as a tall man, with a charming countenance, who made use of brave, serious language, and appeared modestly attired in a long coat.

It is to be assumed from Amerbach's enthusiasm in collecting every picture, drawing, and design by Holbein which he could find,

[1] Woltmann, i. 183.

[2] From Pantaleon, *Heldenbuch*, vol. iii.

that the two young men became personal friends, or, at least, that their acquaintance, first made in the latter's painting-room, grew to be a closer one than was usually formed between sitter and artist in days when the painter and his craft were not always very highly considered, or his social standing more than a very modest one. Amerbach also collected pictures and sketches by other artists, and engravings, coins, and antiquities of all kinds. Upon his death in 1562 his son Basilius inherited the collection, and, inheriting also the artistic tastes of his father, he added, in course of time, a number of important examples, among them various works by Holbein, including the copy of the *Praise of Folly* with the marginal drawings. In 1586 he drew up an inventory and catalogue of the collection, which by that time had obtained considerable reputation. It remained in the possession of his descendants until the middle of the seventeenth century, when it was offered for sale, and was purchased by his native city for the very moderate price of 9000 rix-dollars in the summer of 1662. In addition to examples of metal-work, ivory carvings, coins, and various objects of decorative art, the collection contained forty-nine paintings, of which fifteen were attributed to Holbein, and a chest of thirty-seven drawers, all full of sketches and engravings, among them one hundred and four original drawings by Holbein, a sketch-book with eighty-five studies, one hundred and eleven woodcuts after his designs, the illustrated *Praise of Folly*, and two copies each of the "Dance of Death" and "Old Testament" woodcuts. Modern criticism has somewhat reduced these numbers, but the collection is one of extraordinary value, and, thanks to the energy and artistic taste of the father and son who formed it, and thus preserved many examples which otherwise would have been scattered and lost, it is possible for the Holbein student of to-day to obtain very adequate knowledge of much that the great artist accomplished during the earlier half of his life.[1]

In Holbein's portrait of Bonifacius Amerbach, in the Basel Gallery (No. 314) (Pl. 28),[2] the jurist is represented to the shoulders, almost in

[1] For an exhaustive account of the formation and history of the Amerbach Collection, which contains transcripts from the earliest inventory, prepared by Basilius Amerbach, down to the one drawn up when the collection was taken over by the city, see *Die Entstehung des Amerbach'schen Kunstkabinets und die Amerbach'schen Inventare*, by Dr. Ganz and Dr. Emil Major, in the 59th annual report (1907) of the Basel Gallery.

[2] Woltmann, 10. Reproduced by Davies, p. 60; Knackfuss, fig. 20; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 29.

profile to the spectator's left, a little less than the size of life. He wears a black velvet cap and a black gown with a fur collar, open to show the under-vest of blue-green damask and small white ruff round the neck. The fine, handsome face, with its prominent nose, is of a warm, ruddy complexion, and the bushy hair, which almost hides the ears, and the beard and moustache, are of chestnut colour. On a tree-trunk on the left hangs a large framed tablet with a Latin inscription, probably composed by Erasmus, in which the picture itself is made to extol the art of the painter for its truth to nature. Below these lines the names of the artist and the sitter, and the date, October 14, 1519, are given—

"BON · AMORBACCHIVM ·
IO · HOLBEIN · DEPINGEBAT ·
A · M̄ · D̄ · X̄IX̄ · PRID · EID · OCTOBR."

The head stands out against a pale blue-green sky, with the snow-covered crests of the Schneeberg in the distant background, and the branch of a vine or fig-tree on the right. The richness and transparency of the colour is remarkable ; it is, perhaps, of all Holbein's portraits the most transparent in effect, with no trace of the dryness which sometimes characterises his later work.[1] In technical execution it shows a considerable advance on the earlier portraits of Meyer and his wife and of Benedikt von Hertenstein, the modelling and the minute and accurate draughtsmanship of the details, such as the beard and the hair, being already almost as masterly and assured as in his greatest portraits painted fourteen or fifteen years later. As a study of character and expression, too, it is very striking. The combined strength and refinement of Amerbach's nature, and the kindliness and sense of humour which shine from his deep blue eyes, below projecting brows, have been admirably rendered, and in many ways the portrait shows that Holbein had already attained almost, if not quite, to the full maturity of his powers. In it, too, can be seen for the first time in his portraiture the practical application of the experience he must have gained during his visit to Italy, for in the lighter, gayer, scheme of colour, and the change in technique, which gradually developed into the enamel-like surface of his flesh-tints which is so characteristic a feature of his English portraits, the influence of

[1] Wornum, *Holbein*, p. 117.



BONIFACIUS AMERBACH

1519

Basel Gallery


TA LICET FACIES VI
E NON CEDO SED INSTAR
M DOMINE IVSTIS NO
ILE LINEOLIS
CTO IS DUM PERAGIT
IEIH SIC GNAVITER IN ME
QVOD NATVRAE EST,
XPRIMIT ARTIS OPVS
ON AMORBACCHIVM
O HOLBEIN DEPINGEBAT
M D XIX PRID EID OCT

the painters of Lombardy, such as Leonardo, Mantegna, Luini, and others, is plainly evident.[1] In the Amerbach inventory it is described as: "Meines vatters conterfehtung in der iugend H. Holbeins vf holz mit ölfarb." There is an old copy of it in the Karlsruhe Gallery.

During the first years of his citizenship Holbein received a number of commissions for sacred paintings for churches, including the cathedral. For the last-named building he painted the great folding doors of the organ-case, and possibly the altar-piece, now lost, of which, however, the wings, with scenes from the Passion, remain, among the most valued possessions of the Basel Gallery. A still earlier connection with the cathedral works is proved by an entry in the Bishop's court-treasury accounts for September 1520; and that at this time, only a month or two after he had taken up his rights of citizenship, he was not too proud to undertake tasks of the humblest kind, is shown by the nature of the commission, which was merely for the painting over of some stonework.[2] Only a few of his sacred works have survived. Others, no doubt, were destroyed during the religious disturbances of 1529, when so many of the pictures and works of art in the Basel churches were burnt or shattered to pieces by the mob.

Old copies or engravings exist of several of these destroyed pictures, so that some idea can be obtained of the originals. In all instances they appear to be works of the early Basel period. Earliest of all, possibly one of the very first pictures painted by him in that city, is a "Christ on the Cross between Mary and John," of which there is a copy in the Basel Gallery. This copy, according to the Amerbach inventory, was made by a Bavarian painter, Jakob Clauser, a contemporary and associate of Holbein. A painting of "Christ taken Prisoner," some years later in date, is now only known from an engraving by W. Akersloot, done in 1664. This is a very fine composition, with striking effects of lighting produced by the flaming torches and a large lantern carried by the soldiers, recalling the earlier picture in the first "Passion" series on canvas, as well as "The Arrest" in the Basel altarpiece and the "Adoration of the Shepherds" at Freiburg. There are also two etchings by Hollar after two lost works by Holbein, one representing the "Lamentations over

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xvi.

[2] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xix.

Christ after the taking down from the Cross" (Parthey, 109), which appears to have been the central panel of a triptych, and the other a figure of "St. Barbara" in a landscape (Parthey, 176), which bears a close resemblance to the glass design representing the same saint in the Basel Gallery, described in a later chapter.[1] Finally, there is a series of nine paintings on canvas, representing the Prophets, shown in pairs, now in the Basel Gallery, and coming from the Faesch Collection. According to the Faesch inventory, these are copies made by Bartholomäus Sarburgh after Holbein, and Patin states that the originals, which have now disappeared, were taken by Sarburgh to Belgium.[2] These copies and engravings have all been reproduced by Dr. Ganz in his latest work on the master.[3]

Among those which escaped the fury of the iconoclasts only one or two are dated, but all of them were produced between the years 1519 and 1526. One of the earliest, "The Last Supper," has been already described; two others of about the same date are now in the University Chapel of the minster at Freiburg-im-Breisgau. They are the two wings of an altar-piece, with curved tops, representing "The Nativity" and "The Adoration of the Kings" (Pl. 29).[4] In both panels the artist has striven to achieve striking contrasts of light and shade. In "The Nativity" the figures, which are very small, are placed amid the ruined splendours of some palace of Renaissance architecture, with tall marble pillars, carved capitals, and shattered arches, through which the light of the moon, cloud-obscured, glimmers faintly. The chief illumination emanates from the Infant Christ, who lies, a small nude figure, on his white-covered little bed. The soft, supernatural brilliance lights up the faces and figures of Mary and Joseph, who bend over the Child in adoration. This unusual effect of lighting is also to be found in a second painting of "The Nativity" in Freiburg Minster, a fine example of the work of Hans Baldung Grien, completed in 1516; and again in Correggio's famous "Night," painted some years later. In Holbein's picture this light also plays over the small angels who surround the bed, and less brightly on the figure of one of the shepherds peering round a pillar on the left, and on the undersides of the arches overhead. The wings of the attendant angels, instead of springing from the shoulders,

[1] See p. 138. [2] See Appendix (E). [3] Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 188–191.
[4] Woltmann, 155, 156. Reproduced by Knackfuss, figs. 58, 59; Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 56–59.

ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

Inner side of the left wing of the Oberried Altar-piece

ADORATION OF THE KINGS

Inner side of the right wing of the Oberried Altar-piece

UNIVERSITY CHAPEL, FREIBURG MINSTER





grow along and form part of the arms, apparently an original conception of the painter's.[1] In the distance, forming a radiant patch of light amid the darkness of the background, is seen the angel who is hastening to carry the glad tidings to the shepherds. Above, in the sky, the moon also bends and does homage to the new-born Child; to suggest this, Holbein has represented its disc as turned down towards the bed, and foreshortened.[2] The source from which this arrangement was taken was the passage in the Apocrypha: "And behold the cave was filled with a light, surpassing the brilliancy of tapers and torches and greater than sunlight." The effect of the gradually diminishing radiance, which finally loses itself amid the dimly seen ruins, where it mingles with the pale effulgence of the moon, has been finely rendered, and though the picture has suffered some damage, it still retains much of its charm, particularly in the small figures of the angels with their graceful gestures.

In the "Adoration of the Kings," the personages are grouped in front of a great half-ruined building, more massive and less ornate than the one in the "Nativity," whose walls and broken towers, upon which vegetation grows, recede into the distance. Overhead shines the Star of Bethlehem, which has guided the kings on their journey, so bright, in spite of the clouds which partly veil it, as to make the daylight seem almost dark. One of the members of the retinue is gazing upwards at it, and is forced to shield his eyes with his hand, so great is its brilliance. The Virgin is seated with the Child on her knees, before whom the eldest king, an old man with a long grey beard, and dressed in a red robe and a large ermine cape, is kneeling in adoration and offering a golden cup. On the left stands the Moorish king, in white, waiting his turn to present his gifts, and in front of him is a greyhound, which also is looking towards the Child. The second of the three worshippers is on the right, a dark-bearded man, with white ribbons fluttering from his crown, and his offering held in front of him. Numerous figures of attendants are seen in the back-

[1] There is considerable likeness between this group of the Infant Christ and the boy angels surrounding him, and the one in the beautiful "Holy Family" by Gaudenzio Ferrari at Dorchester House, more particularly in the figure of the angel with small wings and close-fitting dress, who, in Holbein's picture, kneels in front of the Child with his back to the spectator, and in the other is shown in profile, supporting him. According to Miss Halsey (*Gaudenzio Ferrari*, p. 86), the Dorchester House picture was "probably painted about 1521."

[2] Knackfuss, p. 83.

ground. In both pictures the head of Mary is a very expressive one. In a narrow compartment at the bottom of each panel the donor, Hans Oberried, and his family are represented kneeling in a long row. On the one side, under the "Nativity," are the donor and his six sons; on the other, under the "Adoration," his wife, Amalie Tschekkenbürlin, and his four daughters. At the front of each row of figures is a shield with the coat of arms of the two families.

These two panels, which were once the wings of an arched altar-piece, the centre panel of which has disappeared, have suffered considerably in the course of their wanderings, more particularly the "Adoration," from injudicious repaintings and repairs, so that much of the beauty of the original colouring has been lost. They appear to have been among Holbein's earliest sacred works after his return from Lucerne, and in them German and Italian influences are commingled; but in spite of their charm and *naïveté*, they do not show that mastery of technique which is already to be found in such a portrait as that of Amerbach, though this no doubt is largely owing to repairs and restoration by some later hand. This less assured touch is particularly noticeable in the figures of the donor and his family.

They were a commission from the merchant Hans Oberried, a native of Freiburg, at the time a town councillor of Basel, in which town he had been resident for nearly thirty years, but who, as an adherent of the Catholic party, was dismissed from office during the religious disturbances of 1529. He therefore renounced his citizenship, and, like Erasmus and Amerbach, left the town and returned to Freiburg, where members of his family still lived. It has been suggested that he ordered this altar-piece of Holbein for presentation to the church of the Carthusian Monastery in Basel, in which a near relative of his wife's, Hieronymus Tschekkenbürlin, was prior. This monastery was in Little Basel, where the Catholic party were in the ascendant, so that some of their pictures and church ornaments were saved from the fury of the mob. Oberried may, therefore, have succeeded in carrying off the two panels with him, though forced to leave the centre one behind, as too big for concealment. His name occurs on one occasion in the Basel town records in connection with Holbein. On September 14, 1521, the Council paid to him a sum of money due to the painter—probably in connection with the Town

Hall wall-paintings—which was possibly in discharge of a debt which the councillor had failed to obtain from the artist.[1]

Oberried died in the same year as the painter, 1543, but the two panels do not appear to have been placed in the chapel of the minster until October 17, 1554, on which day the altar over which they hang was consecrated. With the exception of two short intervals, they have remained ever since in Freiburg. During the Thirty Years War they were sent to Schaffhausen for safety. From there the Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria had them brought to Munich for his inspection, and later on they were taken to Ratisbon, in order to be shown to the Emperor Ferdinand III. In 1796 they were carried away by the French, but were returned from Colmar in 1808.[2] They were then replaced over the altar of the University Chapel in the choir of the minster, where they still remain, the only church paintings by Holbein still to be found hanging within the walls of a consecrated building. About the time of their return from France they appear to have undergone a severe restoration.

The altar-piece in the Basel Gallery (No. 315) (Pl. 30),[3] consisting of eight scenes from the Passion of Christ, on four upright panels, forming the wings of a triptych, was evidently painted after Holbein's return from those wanderings which took him for a short period over the Alps, for in composition and colour-scheme it displays a marked North Italian influence. At one time it was regarded throughout Switzerland as Holbein's masterpiece. Nothing is known of its early history, but it was held in the highest estimation throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to tradition, it was originally painted for the cathedral of Basel, and was, by some means or other, saved from destruction during the troubles of 1529. In this case tradition appears to have probability on its side.[4] On November 5, 1770, it was removed from the Basel Town Hall, where it had been hanging for more than two hundred years, and was placed in the Library among the other

[1] Woltmann, i. 178.

[2] Woltmann, i. 176. Wornum, p. 112 (quoting from Hegner, *Hans Holbein d. J.* 1827, and Schreiber, *Geschichte des Münsters zu Freiburg*, &c.).

[3] Woltmann, 20. Reproduced by Knackfuss, figs. 54, 55, and 56; Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 46–54; Mrs. Fortescue, Pl. 9.

[4] According to Peter Ochs, it was painted for the Council Chamber of the Basel Town Hall. Boisserée (1829) was of opinion that the damaged panel of "The Last Supper," already described, originally formed the central panel of this altar-piece.

art treasures of the city, in which building the collection was housed until the present Gallery was built. Numerous early references to it are to be found which testify to its great reputation in the past. Sandrart was enthusiastic in its praises. "The most excellent and the crown of all his art," he wrote, "is the Passion of Christ, painted on a panel in eight compartments, and preserved in the Town Hall at Basel; a work in which all that art can do is to be found, both as regards the devotion and the grace of the persons represented, whether religious or secular, or of a higher or lower class, and with respect to the figures, building, landscape, day and night. This panel testifies to the honour and fame of its master, giving place to none either in Germany or Italy, and justly bearing the laurel wreath among ancient works."[1]

Sandrart, when painting the portrait of Maximilian I of Bavaria, who was a great art-collector, spoke so highly of this work that the latter determined to possess it. He is said to have offered the Baselers any price they liked to put upon it; and, having already succeeded in tempting the Nurembergers to part with Dürer's "Apostles," although the painter had bequeathed them to his native city, he hoped to be equally successful in this instance; but the Basel councillors were less mercenary, and refused his offer.

In more recent days this altar-piece has been subjected to severe and unfavourable criticism. Rumohr refused to accept Holbein as its author, and Mr. Wornum regarded it as a careful work by the elder Holbein, though better in grouping and decoration than was usual with him. He could not see in it any sign of the younger Holbein's stupendous power of grasping and representing individual character, and thought that though the composition might possibly be his, the actual painting was certainly the work of some other hand.[2] Unfortunately, in 1771, immediately after the picture's transference from the Town Hall to the Library, it was placed in the hands of Nikolaus Grooth of Stuttgart for restoration, who succeeded only too well in removing all the original beauty of the colouring, though leaving the drawing much as he found it. Though following to the best of his ability Holbein's colour-scheme, he completely destroyed its harmony, and obliterated all signs of the delicacy of the painter's brushwork by the garish tones and smooth finish which he gave to

[1] Sandrart, *Teutsche Akademie*, ii. p. 82.

[2] Wornum, pp. 68–71.

THE PASSION OF CHRIST

Outer sides of the Wings of an Altar-Piece

BASEL GALLERY





the whole surface.[1] The picture thus retains little of its early beauty, charm, and freshness, but in spite of the superadded paint of the restorer, it is an undoubted and an important work by the master of about the year 1520. This can be seen most clearly, perhaps, when the picture is studied from photographs, in which the eye is not misled by gaudy and inharmonious colour. It is, no doubt, owing to this painful restoration that more than one earlier writer has refused to regard it as Holbein's handiwork. On the other hand, Woltmann was of opinion that Grooth's restoration was limited to careful cleaning and slight retouching, and he states that this is proved by existing records in the minutes of the University.[2] The general effect of the small pictures of which it is composed is also marred by the heavy upright bars of the gold frame which divide each wing into two parts.

The top is circular, and Holbein has divided each panel into two by a horizontal band of scroll and leaf ornament in gold. The four scenes in the upper half, running from left to right, are "Christ on the Mount of Olives," "The Kiss of Judas," "Christ before the High Priest," and "The Scourging"; and in the lower half, "Christ Mocked," "Christ bearing the Cross," "The Crucifixion," and "The Burial." This arrangement gives a series of high, narrow compartments, about 26 in. high by 13 in. wide, and in the filling of them the artist has adapted his composition to this somewhat unusual shape with remarkable skill.

In spite of the cruel treatment to which it has been subjected, enough of Holbein's original work remains to show a striking advance in composition, power of conception, and dramatic feeling when compared with the "Passion" pictures produced by the two brothers some four or five years earlier. Each one of the subjects forms a small but complete picture in itself, but at the same time they have been combined, by a judicious arrangement of light and shade, into one harmonious whole. In each composition the story is told with considerable dramatic force, and the facial types are in most cases less grotesque than in the earlier "Passion," in which an exaggerated ugliness of feature is made use of in order to bring home to the spectator the hateful character of the persecutors of Christ. Here and there

[1] That the restorer made changes, more particularly in the colour, can be seen from two old copies of the "Betrayal" and the "Crucifixion" subjects, now in the depot of the Basel Gallery, which indicate the picture's original state.

[2] Woltmann, Eng. trans., p. 128.

the drawing is somewhat faulty, more particularly where violent action is shown, as in the movements of the soldiers with whips and rods in "The Scourging." In several of the scenes the lighting is managed with admirable effect. In "Christ on the Mount of Olives" the black darkness of the night is brightly illuminated by the flying angel upholding the Cross, the radiance falling upon the uplifted face of the kneeling Saviour and on the heads of the disciples sleeping at his side, while in the distance the light from a single torch glitters on the helmets of the advancing soldiers. In the next two scenes the light comes entirely from the torches of the soldiery. In the "Kiss of Judas" it illuminates the trunk and lower branches of a great tree, the heads of Christ and Judas, and the uplifted spears and battle-axes of the mob of gesticulating and shouting men who are roughly binding their captive. In the foreground St. Peter, kneeling over the body of Malchus, holds the knife aloft with which he is about to strike off the latter's ear. The scene is full of dramatic movement. In "Christ before the High Priest," the torches light up the front of an elaborate Renaissance building and the raised seat of Caiaphas. Both the "Scourging" and "Mocking" take place within the interior of an equally elaborate edifice, with large arches and marble pillars, the light in the former coming through circular windows. In the "Scourging" the utmost vehemence is displayed in the actions of the soldiers; in the "Mocking" the figure of Christ has great nobility of character. In "Christ bearing the Cross" (Pl. 31 (1)) the foreground is crowded with figures issuing through the gateway of the town, one of the round towers of which rises to the top of the picture, while in the distance are seen the walls and roofs and bridges of a city by a river, with horsemen and other figures, and lofty snow mountains in the background. In "Christ on the Cross" (Pl. 31 (2)) the three crucified figures stand out strongly against an inky black background. In the final scene the dead body of Christ is borne across a green meadow towards the entrance to the tomb, which is cut in a lofty rock, in the fissures of which trees and bushes are growing, while some way off the Virgin and others with her stand overcome with grief. The whole composition of this altar-piece shows the influence of Holbein's Italian visit in more ways than one; and in it he has abandoned to a very great extent the earlier practice of his country in the figures of his soldiers, who are no longer dressed in the German costume of

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CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS

THE CRUCIFIXION

Details of the outer sides of the wings of the "Passion" Altar-piece

BASEL GALLERY





his day, but in the Roman helmet and accoutrements such as he must have seen in contemporary Italian pictures, more particularly those of Mantegna. Although the types of some of the heads are distinctly German, recalling similar heads in his father's pictures and his own earlier works, the predominating influence is Italian. At about the time of his visit to Italy Luini and Gaudenzio Ferrari were at work together upon the screen for the ancona in the chapel of Sant' Abbondio in the cathedral at Como, and it is suggested, not only that Holbein must have studied this, and earlier works by the two Italian masters in the same building, such as the great altar-piece in the Sant' Abbondio Chapel now regarded as largely Ferrari's work, and the beautiful altar-piece by Luini in the neighbouring chapel of St. Jerome, but that possibly he also entered the studio of one or the other of them for a short period. Reminiscences of Ferrari in particular can be traced in this and other sacred paintings produced by Holbein at about this time.[1] For his background motives he appears to have made use in some instances of buildings close at hand; in others traces of his journey over the Alps can be seen. Thus, in the "Scourging" the setting recalls the Romanesque architecture of the neighbouring church of Othmarsheim, that of the "Mocking" the interior of the cathedral of Basel, while the round tower in the "Cross-Bearing" resembles the flanking towers to one of the gates of the same city.[2]

The small picture of "Mary Magdalen at the Holy Sepulchre," or "Noli Me Tangere,"[3] in Hampton Court Palace (No. 599) (Pl. 32), is closely allied to the Basel altar-piece, and was probably painted at about the same period, possibly in 1520 or the following year. The light of dawn is stealing over the landscape, driving away the darkness of night, well suggesting "the early morning, when it was yet dark." On the right rises a great rock, with trees and bushes growing over it, and at its base the square opening of the tomb, from which issues a dim, supernatural light, making visible the two angels in white raiment seated at the head and foot of the grave. In the centre of the foreground stands

[1] See Ethel Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, pp. 58, 69, &c.; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxii., &c. The technique, also, closely resembles that of the Milanese school, differing considerably from Holbein's earlier practice.

[2] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 235.

[3] Reproduced by Ernest Law, *Holbein's Pictures at Windsor Castle*, Pl. x.; Davies, p. 98; Knackfuss, fig. 57; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 80.

Mary Magdalen, a look of wonder on her face, holding a marble vase of spikenard in her left hand, and the right stretched out towards the risen Christ, who shrinks back, both hands held up with a gesture of repulsion, as he exclaims, "Touch Me not." Mary's head is bound with a turban, and a dark cloak almost covers her dress. This figure is reminiscent of an Italian model. In the distance are seen the small figures of Peter and John, hastening away from the empty sepulchre to spread the news of the Resurrection. Peter, still doubting his eyes, is eagerly gesticulating as he strides over the ground, while John, who "saw and believed," walks more calmly by his side. Behind them rises a tall tree into the dim morning sky, of the pyramidal shape so familiar in Italian paintings of the period, while in the background the breaking dawn lights the crosses on Calvary. It is, as Knackfuss says, "a wonderful masterpiece of poetical painting." [1]

The face of Our Lord bears a strong resemblance to that of the Christ in the "Christ before the High Priest" subject in the Basel altar-piece. Indeed, both in treatment and feeling, there is a close resemblance between these two works. The landscape in the Hampton Court picture has much in common with that of "Christ on the Mount of Olives" and of "The Entombment" of the altar-painting. In the latter, too, is to be found the same bush-grown rock of yellow colour, with the square opening of the sepulchre, while in each picture the light and shade and colouring are much alike.

When attention was first called to this work some forty years ago, critics were divided in their opinions as to its authorship. Dr. Woltmann ascribed it to Bartholomäus Bruyn, and several other names in place of Holbein's have been suggested from time to time. His latest English biographer, Mr. Gerald Davies, assigns it to "a painter of the German school, who had probably seen and been deeply influenced by the grave and earnest works of Holbein at Basel." "Neither on the grounds of its design nor of its technique," he says, "do I find myself able to accept it as a work of Holbein," and he proceeds to draw attention to "the angular and uncouth projection of the forward leg in the figure of our Lord, an exaggeration which is repeated with even more unnatural emphasis in the distant figure of St. Peter as he walks and gesticulates at the side of St. John. The action, moreover, of the hands of the chief figure, intended to be expressive of the

[1] Knackfuss, p. 81.

"NOLI ME TANGERE"

Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen

HAMPTON COURT



"Noli Me Tangere," is somewhat exaggerated and theatrical."[1] He calls attention to other details which he thinks prove that the work cannot be from Holbein's brush. The type of the head, however, and the action of the hands, as well as the position of the feet, very closely resemble more than one of Holbein's small figures in his designs for woodcuts, more particularly the Christ in one of the little pictures on the frontispiece to Coverdale's Bible, in which the action is almost identical, while other instances could be given. The picture has suffered in the course of time, and, like the Basel altar-piece, has not escaped repainting in parts, but remains nevertheless an undoubted example of Holbein's sacred art at, or shortly after, the period when he had just settled down in Basel as a member of the Guild "zum Himmel." Modern German criticism is agreed as to its authorship. Dr. Ganz places it at the end of Holbein's first visit to England.

This picture has been in the royal collections of England since the reign of Henry VIII, and in the inventory of his pictures at Whitehall, taken at his death in 1547, it was entered as "Item, a table with the picture of our Lord appearing to Mary Magdalen" (No. 33), while it occurs again in that of James II (No. 520), "Our Saviour appearing to Mary Magdalen in the garden." That in those early days the picture was regarded as a work of Holbein's is proved by an entry in Evelyn's *Diary*, under the date September 2, 1680, describing several days spent by him in the examination of the contents of the library and private rooms at Whitehall during the absence of Charles II at Windsor. He says: "In the rest of the private lodgings contiguous to this (*i.e.* the library), are divers of the best pictures of the great masters, Raphael, Titian, &c., and, in my esteeme, above all, the *Noli me tangere of our blessed Saviour to Mary Magdalen after his Resurrection*, of Hans Holbein, then which I never saw so much reverence and kind of heavenly astonishment express'd in a picture." Nothing is known of its earlier history, or how it came to England, but it is not unnatural to suppose that it was brought over by Holbein himself, as an easily portable example of his powers as a painter of sacred subjects. It is doubly valuable as being the only work by him of this particular class now remaining in this country. On the other hand, it is quite possible that it was painted in England in 1527 for one of his new patrons. Mr. Ernest Law points out that there is a

[1] Davies, p. 98.

rendering of this same subject by Lambert Sustris, a German painter, and pupil of Christopher Schwartz of Munich, who flourished about the end of the sixteenth century. This last-named work, both in the figure of Christ, and in several other points, bears a close resemblance to the Hampton Court picture, to which, indeed, it may have owed its inspiration.[1]

Holbein's rapidly-maturing mastery of technique and power in expressing the most poignant emotion, as well as his complete understanding of the architecture of the Renaissance and skill in making brilliant use of it as a setting for his figures, is shown in two panels in the Basel Gallery, which at one time evidently formed a small diptych such as would be used in some household chapel. They represent "Christ as the Man of Sorrows" and "Mary as Mater Dolorosa" (No. 317) (Pl. 33),[2] and are carried out in a brown monochrome, with the exception of the sky seen through the arches, which is a bright blue, the two contrasted tones producing a very harmonious colour effect. In each panel the background consists of an elaborate arrangement of pillars, arches, and vaulting, richly carved and decorated with panels, friezes, and medallions of ornament, which recall the very similar fantastic details of Renaissance architecture in the left wing of the Freiburg altar-piece, and more than one of his designs for painted glass of this period.[3] In the "Mater Dolorosa" one of the friezes represents a band of small naked putti, which, according to Dr. Kœgler, is based upon a similar frieze in the cathedral of Como,[4] while other figure subjects are contained in the medallions; in the "Man of Sorrows" the decoration is entirely of floriated ornament. The general effect produced is one of great richness, almost superabundance, of ornamentation, and lavishness of architectural detail. In spite of this, the two figures are not overwhelmed by it, but at once arrest the attention. Christ is seated on the steps between two pillars, nude, with the exception of a loin-cloth, crowned with thorns, his head sinking in agony on his left shoulder. Mary, a veil over her head, and the folds of her robes falling in straight parallel lines, kneels with open, outstretched hands, and gazes with grief-stricken countenance at the Saviour's sufferings. Very reverent

[1] *Holbein's Pictures at Windsor Castle*, p. 32.
[2] Woltmann, 19. Reproduced by Davies, p. 76; Knackfuss, figs. 60, 61; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 45.
[3] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 235.
[4] *Jahrbuch der preuss. Kunsts.*, 1907, vol. 28.

CHRIST, THE MAN OF SORROWS

MARY, MATER DOLOROSA

Diptych, painted in brown monochrome, with blue sky

BASEL GALLERY

feeling is shown in the conception of each figure. The nude form of Christ indicates a very accurate study of the human body, while the expression of pain and intense sorrow has been admirably seized. The solitude of this grief-stricken figure is intensified by the grandeur and richness of the building in which he is seated, deserted by all men. An equally fine conception of deep though restrained sorrow is shown in the face of the Virgin, and in the beautiful, expressive hands. A peculiarity of this diptych is that the horizon is placed below the level of the picture, although it is so small that it can never have been intended for hanging at a considerable height, such as the arrangement of the horizon-line would suggest. It may be, therefore, that it is the preliminary study for some larger wall-painting, finished with unusual care, or a reduced copy made by Holbein from some altar-piece of his which has now disappeared, probably during the disturbances of 1529. It forms part of the Amerbach Collection, and is described in the catalogue as: "Item zwei H. Holbeins mit olfarb gmalte täfelin darin Christus vnd Maria in eim ghüs, mit steinfarb."

There is a drawing in the Basel Gallery representing the "Holy Family" (Pl. 34),[1] which is remarkable for the rich setting of Renaissance architecture in which Holbein has placed his figures. The arrangement is so elaborate that the latter at first appear to be of only secondary importance. On the topmost of a flight of steps the Infant Christ is learning to walk, his hands held by his mother and Anna, who are seated on either side of him. On the left the aged Joachim, whose pronounced features recall more than one head in the earlier "Passion" series, is looking on from behind a pillar, while Joseph stands with his arm round another pillar on the opposite side. Behind the group is a semicircular niche, the upper part scalloped like a shell, supported by columns and outstanding pillars, the latter with a sculptured frieze of putti round the base. The capitals of the columns and the frieze which they support are decorated with foliated designs in which figures are mingled. A lunette in the arch which crowns the niche is ornamented in a similar way, and contains a tablet with the signature "Hans Hol." Over a projecting cornice is a sculptured figure of Samson slaying the lion. The architectural motive throughout is strongly Italian, and, indeed, in parts bears a striking resem-

[1] Woltmann, 62. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 51; Knackfuss, fig. 65.

blance to the Porta della Rana of the cathedral of Como,[1] while the whole drawing furnishes still further strong evidence that Holbein must have crossed the Alps, and that designs such as this were not mere efforts of his imagination. It is a pen drawing on a brown-red ground, washed with grey-black and heightened with white in the parts where the light falls, and its date is about 1520 or 1521. It is a study for a picture, or, more probably, for a wall-painting, to be placed at some height, as the horizon-line is well below the level of the ground. The strongly-marked perspective of the background, too, which slants rapidly towards the right, suggests such a purpose, and that it was to form the left wing of some considerable scheme of wall-decoration, with a more important central subject, and a corresponding right wing. A smaller drawing, also at Basel, of the same date and style, a pen and wash drawing, heightened with white on a grey ground, represents the Virgin, seated on a similar high step between two pillars, suckling the Child.[2] With the exception of the two columns, one of which is unfinished, the background is left blank, but in the painting for which it was a study it is natural to suppose that the architectural setting would have been as elaborate as in the "Holy Family," which it resembles in its low horizon-line.

There is a third drawing, in the Städtisches Museum, Leipzig, which belongs to the same period as the two just described, and has many points in common with them.[3] It is a pen drawing heightened with white on a dark grey ground, and represents the Madonna seated on a stone bench over which her cloak is spread, supporting the Infant Christ in his first attempts to walk. The Child, with one arm and leg uplifted, is laughing with delight, and the attitude of the Virgin, with head bent down, and her long hair blown on one side as though by a breeze, is one of great beauty. In this arrangement of the hair, though more free, and in the type of the Madonna's face, though more beautiful, this drawing bears a close resemblance to the more elaborate of the two in the Amerbach Collection. It is signed and dated "H. H." and "1519" on two panels on either side of the carpet or pavement beneath the Virgin's feet, and was possibly

[1] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to ii. 51. A photograph of the sculptures on this doorway is reproduced by Dr. Ganz in his *Holbein*, p. xix.

[2] Woltmann, 52. Reproduced by Davies, p. 224; Knackfuss, fig. 64.

[3] Woltmann, 172. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng*, Pl. 6.



THE HOLY FAMILY

Washed drawing on a red ground

Basel Gallery



made shortly after Holbein's return from Lucerne to Basel. It is a most sympathetic and natural study of maternal love and the happiness of childhood, and has a grace and charm which the two other drawings, made at about the same date, do not possess in the same degree.[1]

After the early "Cross-Bearing" panel of 1515 at Karlsruhe, there is no dated picture among this group of sacred paintings until the "Dead Christ in the Tomb," in the Basel Gallery (No. 318), of the year 1521, is reached (Pl. 35).[2] This remarkable work, which forms part of the Amerbach Collection, is a life-size study of a dead man, and one whose end has, perhaps, been brought about by violence. Holbein has painted the corpse upon a long, low panel, and has represented it as lying enclosed within the narrow confines of a tomb of plain marble of a greenish hue, the side facing the spectator being removed in order to permit a view of the interior. The body, which almost fills the narrow space, rests on its back on a plain white cloth, over which the long dark hair falls. The head is seen almost in profile, but very slightly turned towards the front, the short brown beard pointing directly upwards. The light comes from some small aperture low down at the foot of the tomb, and falls on the soles of the feet, and illuminates the lower side of each prominent feature of the body, such as the under parts of the chin, the white swollen lips of the open mouth, the nose, and the eyebrows, leaving other portions in shadow, and thus intensifying the feeling of horror which the picture at first produces. It shows that Holbein, at the age of twenty-four, had attained a complete mastery of technical expression, for it is painful in the completeness of its realism. The rigidity of the limbs, the haggard cheeks with strongly-projecting bones, the staring, half-sunken eyes, the lifeless skin, the colourless face with bloodless lips, the emaciated body with its ribs standing out, have all been set down with relentless accuracy. The indication of decay in the hands and feet, and in the flesh turning green round the wounds in the side, helps to intensify the terror and horror of death which the picture is intended to depict. It was evidently painted from some dead body, how obtained it is impossible to say, but, according to an old tradition, his model was the corpse of a man just taken out of the

[1] See also Appendix (C).

[2] Woltmann, 14. Reproduced by Davies, p. vii.; Knackfuss, figs. 45 and 46; Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 32, 33.

Rhine by the Rhine Bridge. Holbein's object in painting it was undoubtedly to give as complete a rendering as possible of the physical aspects of death as seen in a body approaching decay. It is hardly to be believed that it was his original intention to paint a picture of the "Dead Christ," and that for the purpose he made search in Basel for a corpse to serve as his model. It is much more natural to suppose that, having painted this vividly realistic study, which no patron was likely to purchase, he made it of marketable value by adding the wounds and the title, and so turning it into a "Christ in the Tomb." This is borne out by Basilius Amerbach's entry in his inventory. He calls it "A picture of a dead man, with the title Jesus of Nazareth" ("Ein todten bild H. Holbeins vf holtz mit ölfarben cum titulo Iesus Nazarenus rex"). This Latin title, in large gold Roman letters, runs across a long strip at the top of the picture, a part of the old frame, and between each word is placed a small angel bearing the instruments of Christ's torture. It is from this superscription, and from the stigmata, that the work receives its only sacred significance; in all other respects it is a remorseless, almost revolting, study of some man who has died a violent death, a man with features of no physical beauty, and in no way resembling Holbein's customary type of the Christ. There is nothing of the dignity or the supernatural beauty which so often irradiate the inanimate countenance shortly after life has passed away; but, regarded as a work of art, the picture is in the highest sense one of great beauty by reason of the mastery of its technical achievement, the knowledge it displays of the human body, its absolute truth to nature, and the harmony of its colouring. The contrast of the warm olive green of the sarcophagus with the pale grey tones of the flesh produces an admirable effect. On a darker slab at the feet is the inscription "MDXXI. H.H." A further touch of realism is shown in the large crack in the marble at the back of this slab.

Possibly this picture found a place in one of the Basel churches; it has been suggested by Woltmann[1] that it once formed the predella to some altar-piece representing Christ's Passion, and this, no doubt, is correct, though for the reasons given above it does not seem likely that the artist originally painted it for that purpose.

[1] Woltmann, vol. i. p. 174.

THE DEAD CHRIST IN THE TOMB

Predella of an Altar-piece

1521

Basel Gallery



This "Dead Christ" remains an isolated example among the many varied sides of Holbein's art. In the following year, in the "Solothurn Madonna" (Pl. 36)[1] he combines truth in the delineation of the human figure with physical and spiritual beauty, and reaches great dignity and nobility in his conception of character. This picture, with the exception of the "Meyer Madonna," is the most important and beautiful altar-panel from Holbein's brush that has survived, though by no means in its original condition.

The composition consists of only four figures. The Virgin is seated in the centre, upon a small platform covered with a carpet, holding the Infant Christ on her lap, and, standing on either side, are St. Nicholas,[2] and St. Ursus, the patron saint of Solothurn. The Virgin is clad in a light-red robe, and over it a bright-blue sleeveless mantle, fastened round the neck with a cord, which hangs in somewhat straight and simple folds and spreads over the carpet at her feet, an ample garment wide enough to cover all who seek her protection. Her golden hair falls upon both shoulders, the upper part of the head being covered with a veil of thin, transparent gauze, surmounted by a golden crown of very decorative design studded with precious stones. She holds the nude Child upon her knees, her right hand grasping one chubby little leg, while the other is placed under his left arm. The head is perhaps the most attractive and sympathetic of all Holbein's representations of the Madonna. There is a sweetness, modesty, and purity in its expression, and a quiet dignity which personify in the happiest manner the beauty of divine motherhood, and betray stronger evidences than had hitherto appeared in his work of the marked effect of his study of the paintings of contemporary Italian artists. The face is round and full, and of the German type, and in its features by no means one of ideal loveliness, but the happy and tender smile which hovers on the lips, and the deep maternal love which shines in the eyes, give to it a very real and arresting beauty of its own. The plump, round-headed Child is a delightful study from real life. The foreshortening of the little feet, with their crinkled-up toes and the delicately-traced folds in the skin, is admirable, and the small fat hands, one of which is turned away from the body with the palm upwards, a characteristic attitude

[1] Woltmann, 247. Reproduced by Davies, p. 80; Knackfuss, fig. 47; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 36.

[2] Or, according to some writers, St. Martin of Tours.

with small children, are full of expression. The right hand is held as though in the act of benediction.

St. Ursus, the patron saint of the church, and one of the martyrs of the Theban Legion, stands on the spectator's right, a noble and dignified figure, clad from head to foot in plate armour of a fashion still worn in Holbein's day. His helmet is decorated with ostrich feathers, and one gauntleted hand grasps the hilt of his great sword, while with the other he holds the banner of the Legion, a large red flag with a white cross, which reaches almost to the top of the picture. He appears a true soldier of the Church, with his dignified and martial bearing, his keen eye and determined mouth, half hidden by the dark moustache, each hair of which has been carefully drawn in the manner which Holbein practised in portraiture throughout his life. The colours of the flag are reflected in the highly-polished surface of his armour. On the opposite side stands St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the poor. He is dressed in ecclesiastical vestments of great splendour, which have evidently been copied by the painter from some existing example, dating from an earlier period than that of the painting. Over his violet chasuble are rich embroideries in gold and colours, with representations of the Centurion of Capernaum before Christ, the Saviour before Caiaphas, and the Crowning with Thorns. The red mitre is embroidered with gold and pearls, and, as recently pointed out by Dr. Ganz,[1] the figure of St. Nicholas himself, with his attributes, a book and three golden balls. In his left hand he holds his pastoral staff, and with the other drops alms into a bowl held up by a kneeling beggar at his feet. The beardless face is refined and delicate, and its spiritual character is in marked contrast to the vigorous and manly expression of the knightly saint who stands facing him. Only the uplifted face of the beggar, and the one hand which holds the alms-bowl, are shown. He appears as one of the attributes of the saint, and the artist has only indicated enough of his form to make this clear; otherwise he is almost entirely concealed behind the Virgin's voluminous mantle. There is nothing here of the painful realism of poverty and disease such as is shown in the kneeling figures in the "St. Elizabeth of Hungary" wing of the "St. Sebastian" altar-piece of the elder Holbein at Munich, or in the son's earlier Passion pictures in Basel.

[1] *Holbein*, p. 234.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, WITH ST. URSUS AND A HOLY BISHOP

1522

Solothurn Gallery



Holbein's art had reached a point in its development when such realistic methods of bringing home to the spectator the lessons his pictures were intended to convey were discarded

A peculiarity of the picture is the exceedingly simple setting in which the figures are placed; whereas Holbein's usual practice at this period of his life was to make an almost lavish use of architectural ornamentation in his backgrounds. In the "Solothurn Madonna" it consists of a perfectly plain round archway of stone, quite free from sculptured decoration, across which two thick iron bars are placed, fixed into the stonework as though to strengthen it, with upright cross bars running to the crown of the arch. It has been suggested that the vaulting of the church for which the picture was intended was supported and strengthened in the same way, and that Holbein introduced it into his altar-piece in order that it might be in perfect harmony with its surroundings; but the motive appears in more than one of the backgrounds to Ferrari's pictures, such as the "Flagellation," one of the great series of frescoes in the church of S. M. delle Grazie, at Varallo,[1] finished in 1513. Through this open archway a pale blue sky is seen, against which the Virgin's crown stands out. The light increases in brightness as it nears the Madonna's head, thus forming a natural halo. This simplicity of treatment is also to be observed in other details. The Virgin is not seated upon an elaborate throne, but on some low seat or stool which cannot be seen. The carpet at her feet, covering the stone step, is green, with a geometrical diamond pattern in white and red, and two shields inset containing the arms of the donor and his wife,[2] which are partly hidden and protected by the Virgin's cloak. Below St. Ursus the monogram "H. H." and the date "1522" are painted as though cut in the stone step.

The Virgin and the Infant Christ in this picture appear to be idealised portraits of Holbein's wife and first-born child. All available evidence indicates either 1520 or 1521 as the date of his marriage, shortly before or after he became a citizen of Basel, so that his own child may well have served him as his model. Hans Bock the elder,

[1] See Ethel Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, p. 42, and Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 234.

[2] First deciphered by Herr F. A. Zetter-Collin. The carpet itself recalls more than one very similar carpet in Ferrari's pictures, though the latter are much finer in design; in a "Madonna and Child" belonging to Sig. Vittadini at Arcorre, for instance, or the "Christ before Herod" in the Varallo frescoes.

the artist who was employed by the Basel Council to renovate Holbein's wall-paintings in the Town Hall, made a free copy of the figure of the Child in this picture when he was in Solothurn in 1604 or the following year, and depicted him with a serpent as the conqueror of sin.[1] This copy, now in the Basel Gallery (No. 91), belonged to Amerbach, and was entered in the catalogue as "A naked child sitting on a serpent, a copy of a painting by Holbein, exactly copied in the greater part by H. Bock on wood in oil colours."[2] Woltmann describes a drawing of the same child's head, almost in profile, with the mother's hand supporting it under the left shoulder, as in the picture, in the Weigel Collection, Leipzig, a silver-point drawing, signed and dated, "Hans Holbein, 1522."[3] It has the same large, rather round head, short neck, and high forehead, as in the painting, and it was probably a preliminary sketch for it.[4]

In the head of the Madonna, although Holbein has idealised and spiritualised his model, can be traced the predominant features of his wife as shown in the portrait he painted of her with their two children some seven years later, after his return from England to Basel in 1528, though the face in the latter painting has become coarsened and bears the marks of care and even sorrow, and has little in common with the beautiful Solothurn head. The latter more closely resembles the very fine portrait of a young woman in the Hague Gallery (No. 275) (Pl. 37),[5] which is now regarded by some critics as a likeness of Holbein's wife, painted just before or immediately after he married her, in the earliest part of his second Basel period. This picture is one of the strayed waifs from the royal collections of England, for it is branded on the back with the crown and "C.R.," which denote that it was once in the possession of Charles I, in whose catalogue it was attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. It appears afterwards to have been in the Arundel Collection, and is most probably the portrait described in the 1655 inventory as "ritratto della Moglie de Holbein," which, after the death of the Countess of Arundel, must

[1] See note to No. 91 in Basel Catalogue, 1908.

[2] "Ein nackend kindlin sitzt vf einer schlangen kompt von Holbeins gemeld durch H. Bocken vf holtz mit olfarben mehrteil nachgemolt."

[3] Woltmann, No. 173. Eng. by J. C. Loedel for Weigel's *Hdz. berühmter Meister.*

[4] Woltmann, vol. i. p. 183.

[5] Woltmann, 161. Reproduced by Sir Claude Phillips, *The Picture Gallery of Charles I*, *Portfolio* monograph, 1896, p. 63; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 60.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN, POSSIBLY HOLBEIN'S WIFE

Royal Picture Gallery, Mauritshuis, The Hague



have been sold in Amsterdam, and purchased by some Dutch collector. It fetched 65 florins at the Joan de Vries sale in 1738, and was afterwards in the G. van Slingelandt and the William V of Orange collections. It is evidently not one of the pictures taken over to Holland by William III during one of his visits to the Hague, as has been suggested, for there is nothing to show that it ever returned to the English royal collections, nor is it included in the list of works unsuccessfully reclaimed by Queen Anne from the Dutch States when she ascended the throne. Holbein's authorship of this work has been frequently disputed, some writers regarding it as a good old copy after a lost original by the master, while others look upon it as a fine original work by some Netherlandish contemporary of Holbein's who was strongly under his influence. Dr. Woltmann considered it to be most probably by Holbein himself, and others have followed him in this opinion. Dr. Ganz, in his recent book, includes it among the genuine works of the second Basel period, and points out that the soft, tender colour-scheme in which it has been carried out was the result of Holbein's recent visit to Italy, and explains its earlier attribution to Leonardo.[1] When allowance is made for the passage of time, and the troubles and cares which are supposed to have embittered Elsbeth Holbein's life, there is considerable likeness between this portrait of a comely young *haus-frau* and the wife in the portrait of 1528–9. This is particularly to be noticed in the heavy-lidded, slightly-protruding eyes, much more pronounced in the later picture, while the general shape of the head and form of the features are alike in both. The likeness, however, is not so striking as to make it absolutely certain that in the Hague picture we have a portrait of Holbein's bride. The work is without inscription. She is represented seated, with her crossed hands resting upon her white apron. Her hair is completely covered by a white gauze veil which is carried under the chin, and her gown, edged and lined with fur, is open at the front, showing the plain white, high-necked bodice below. Whether by Holbein or not—and it is difficult to see who else could have painted it—this picture has great charm. A recent writer[2] speaks of this picture as leaving a vivid and permanent impression on the spectator, by reason of the luminous

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 237.

[2] T. de Wyzewa, in a review of Dr. Ganz' book, "À propos d'un Livre nouveau sur Holbein le Jeune," in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, January 15, 1912.

freshness of its colour, the delicate perfume of its purity, and the exquisite, limpid sweetness which exhales from it as from a white rose under a blue sky in spring-time.

In the Louvre there is a silver-point drawing, touched with Indian ink and red crayon, of the head and shoulders of a young woman (Pl. 38),[1] which bears considerable likeness both to the Solothurn Madonna and to the portrait of 1528–9. She is represented almost full-face, with eyes cast down, and her straight hair falling in two large plaits down her back. She wears a necklace with a pendant circular medallion with the Cross of St. Anthony, and across the border of her bodice, which is cut low and straight, runs the device "ALS.IN.ERN.ALS.IN . . ." ("In All Honour").[2] The same heavily-lidded eyes, prominent nose, well-chiselled mouth with its full lips, double chin, and slope of the shoulders, occur both in this drawing and in the Solothurn altar-piece, and are even more strongly marked in the later portrait-group, though in this earlier study the features as yet bear few traces of the trials and experiences of life, but still retain much of their youthful bloom and freshness, and gain a certain beauty from the happy smile which lights them up.

All writers, however, are not agreed in seeing in the Louvre drawing and in the Solothurn Madonna an idealised portrait of Holbein's wife. Those who hold the contrary view regard it as almost impossible that so great a change as that to be noted between the fair and youthful face of the Madonna and that of the sad and careworn, elderly wife of the family group could have taken place in the space of seven years. Mr. Gerald Davies, who fails to see the likeness, regards the Louvre drawing as the work, not of Holbein, but of his father, in which case it cannot be a portrait of Holbein's wife,[3] unless the elder painter spent some time in Basel with his two sons, towards the end of his life, as stated by earlier writers, of which there is no documentary record. It is, however, impossible to agree with this writer in his ascription of this drawing to Hans Holbein the Elder. Mrs. Fortescue, in her recent book on the painter, weaves a romance around the Louvre drawing which has nothing to support

[1] Woltmann, 234. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 14; Mantz, p. 45.

[2] In a woodcut by Lucas Cranach, representing Sibylla of Cleves, the same motto is shown embroidered in pearls on her cap and collar. See Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts, &c. in the British Museum*, ii., p. 320.

[3] Davies, p. 83.

HEAD OF A YOUNG WOMAN

(Probably Holbein's wife)

Study for the Solothurn "Madonna"

Silver-point drawing, touched with red

Louvre, Paris



it but imagination. Her theory is that Holbein became enamoured of his future wife shortly after his arrival in Basel, and that he then made this drawing, the fashion of the hair showing that she was still unmarried. The course of true love, however, did not run smoothly, and the consequent disappointment was the real reason of his "otherwise inexplicable" departure for Lucerne in 1517. During his two years' absence Elsbeth married the tanner Schmid, who not long afterwards died, leaving her free to become the painter's wife when he renewed his suit shortly after his return to Basel. This is a pretty little story, but there is not the slightest evidence to be found in support of it.[1] On the other hand, Woltmann and Dr. Ganz are no doubt correct in regarding the Louvre drawing as the actual first study for the Solothurn Madonna.

The picture was commissioned by Hans Gerster, town archivist of Basel, who was not a native of that city, but whose wife, Barbara Guldenknopf, was a member of a local family. Among Gerster's official duties was that of conducting negotiations with the councils of neighbouring towns, and, after Basel had entered the Swiss confederation in 1501, one of the places to which his official duties frequently took him was Solothurn. There he became a close friend of the Coadjutor Nikolaus von Diesbach, dean of Solothurn Minster, whom he made his spiritual adviser. Circumstances seem to indicate that in 1522 Gerster was under some suspicion as to illegal dealings in the Imperial interests, which eventually brought about his dismissal from office, at about the same time as the fall of that other early patron of Holbein, Jakob Meyer, who lost his seat in the Council through similar causes. It has been suggested, therefore, that the picture was ordered for the Solothurn Minster on the advice of the Coadjutor, in expiation of Gerster's irregular conduct. For the same reason, according to those who hold that the saintly figure on the left represents the Bishop of Tours, St. Martin was chosen as the particular saint to whom all sinners made appeal, and was introduced as intercessor for the donor, while the kneeling beggar may even be a portrait of the archivist himself. The chasuble the saint wears is the one specially prescribed for this office, while the figure of St. Nicholas on the mitre may have been placed there in order to associate the donor's friend, Nikolaus von Diesbach, with the inter-

[1] Mrs. Fortescue, *Holbein*, p. 96.

cession. It is possible that the picture was a commission for the St. Nicholas Chapel of the Minster, founded in 1520, for the presence of St. Ursus, Solothurn's patron saint, proves that it was intended for that place.[1] As the years went by, it suffered from neglect, and the name of the master who had painted it was forgotten, so that when, in 1648, this chapel was pulled down and rebuilt, the picture was regarded as of not sufficient value or beauty to be rehung over its altar. Between 1689 and 1717 it came into the possession of a certain Canon Hartmann, the Minster choirmaster, who in 1683 built and endowed the little chapel of All Saints on the heights above Grenchen, to which he presented or bequeathed the picture. Here, again, it does not appear to have been regarded as a work of any particular importance, and the process of neglect and deterioration continued; and when, in 1864, it was rediscovered by Herr Franz Anton Zetter of Solothurn, in the same small church, it was hanging high up on the wall of the choir, blackened with the smoke of more than two hundred years, its panels worm-eaten, without a frame, and suspended by a cord through two holes which had been bored into the picture itself. Although it was impossible to examine it closely, Herr Zetter was struck with its beauty, still to be discerned through all the discoloration and damage, and when, shortly afterwards, he heard that the chapel was being renovated, he made anxious inquiries as to its fate. For some time all search for it proved unavailing, but in the end it was found, face downward, and splashed all over with whitewash, under the boards which formed the workmen's platform. He was only just in time to save it from final destruction. Upon examination he discovered the signature, and feeling convinced, in spite of scepticism on the part of others whom he consulted, that it was a genuine work of the master's, he purchased it. It was placed in the hands of Eigner, the keeper of the Augsburg Gallery, for restoration, the work occupying three years. The state of the picture was so bad that restoration was essential, and this, on the whole, was well done, though it suffered to some extent during the process. There is, however, a seventeenth-century copy of the picture in existence, which shows that the restorer substituted yellow for red in the Virgin's right sleeve, which does not harmonise with Holbein's original colour-scheme. Herr Zetter presented the picture

[1] Amiet, *Hans Holbeins Madonna von Solothurn*, &c., 1879.

to the Gallery of his native town, where it now occupies the place of honour, so that, thanks to his acumen and enthusiasm, one of Holbein's finest achievements in sacred painting has been saved from oblivion.[1]

In composition the Solothurn Madonna bears close resemblance to a large woodcut, designed by Holbein, on the back of the title-page of the Statute Book or Town Laws of Freiburg-im-Breisgau.[2] This book, *The Municipal Laws and Statutes of the Praiseworthy Town of Freiburg*, by Ulrich Zasius, was published in Basel by Adam Petri in 1520. The Virgin is seated enthroned in front of a niche of Renaissance design. In her attitude, and the way in which she holds the Child on her knees, as well as in her dress and her long hair falling on her shoulders, there is considerable likeness to the altar-piece, as also in the two figures of the patron saints of Freiburg who stand on either side of her, St. George, with one hand resting on his shield and a flag held aloft in the other, and clad, like St. Ursus, in complete armour, and Bishop Lambert, in rich ecclesiastical dress, and holding the crozier, as St. Nicholas does in the Solothurn picture. The similarity between the two designs is particularly close in the position and movement of the arms and hands of the Infant Christ. The woodcut, which is signed "H. H." on the edge of the step on the left, and dated 1519, is richly and grandly designed, the figures of the two saints having been conceived with great nobility, and it is possible that Holbein was so satisfied with its composition that he made use of it two years later when Gerster came to him for an altar-piece.[3]

Only one other picture bears Holbein's signature and the date 1522. This is the full-length representation of "St. Ursula,"[4] which with its companion, "St. George," is in the Karlsruhe Gallery. They evidently formed the wings of an altar-piece, the central panel of which is missing. St. Ursula, who carries a number of long arrows in her arms, symbols of her martyrdom, is clad in the fashion of the

[1] See F. A. Zetter-Collin, "Die Zetter'sche Madonna von Solothurn," in *Festschrift des Kunst-Vereins der Stadt Solothurn*, 1902; and *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, New Series, vol. xi. p. 442.

[2] Woltmann, *Holzschnittwerk H. H.*, 217 and 218. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 40.

[3] See Woltmann, vol. i. p. 199.

[4] Woltmann, 169. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 48; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 35; Woltmann (woodcut by Knaus), vol. i. p. 179.

rich citizen's wife of Holbein's day, as seen in the set of his costume studies in the Basel Gallery, and wears a golden crown and a nimbus with a band of Renaissance ornamentation. Behind her, the branches of a fig-tree stand out against the blue sky, and low down on the horizon is a landscape with a tower. Her necklace, with an open-work medallion containing the cross of St. Anthony, closely resembles the one in the Louvre sketch of Holbein's wife as a young woman. In the companion panel, St. George,[1] with his flag grasped in his left hand, stands over the prostrate dragon, which he has transfixed with his spear. Here again the background consists chiefly of blue sky with a distant hilly landscape. The types of the two heads are not unlike the "Adam and Eve" study of 1517, while the St. Ursula also recalls the Solothurn Madonna, though the face is less idealised. It is possible that his wife also sat for this picture. The costume of St. George, who is crowned with a nimbus containing his name, is very similar to that of the Archangel Michael in the beautiful study in the Basel Gallery already described.[2] The "St. Ursula" is signed and dated "HANS HOLBEIN MDXXII."

These two panels have been renovated and retouched, and, in consequence, much of Holbein's original brushwork has vanished. For this reason they have been regarded by some writers as merely works of the Holbein school. They are accepted as genuine, however, by such modern critics as Dr. Ganz and Herr Knackfuss, while Woltmann,[3] who speaks of the face and bust of St. Ursula as delicately finished in Holbein's happiest manner, though the lower part of her figure and that of St. George are so inferior as to suggest a less skilful hand, conjectured that they were probably designed, and in part painted, by the master himself, and executed under his direction, but without very careful supervision. It has also been suggested that they were the result of a poorly-paid commission for some village church, and that Holbein, in consequence, did not take much trouble over them ; but such a supposition has little probability, for Holbein was never satisfied with inferior work, but always gave of his best, both in great things and small. Mr. Gerald Davies refuses to accept "these weak and slightly affected figures" as possible work of the painter who in the same year produced so great a picture as

[1] Woltmann, 170. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 49; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 34.
[2] See page 79.
[3] Woltmann, p. 179.

the Solothurn Madonna.[1] There can be little doubt however, that, though damaged, they are from the hand of the master himself.

The two large paintings in monochrome on canvas, for the decoration of the inner sides of the doors of the case which covered in the organ in the Minster of Basel when it was not in use, must not be omitted in any consideration of Holbein's work for church decoration.[2] They survived the iconoclastic outbreak of 1529; possibly the mob did not regard them as religious paintings, or they may have escaped owing to their position high up on the wall of the nave, and so not easily reached. Merian mentions them in his *Topographia Helvetiæ*, published in 1622,[3] and in 1775 Emanuel Büchel made a water-colour drawing of them in their original position,[4] for his collection of the monuments, sculptures, and paintings in Basel Minster, from which drawing it is to be seen that they decorated the upper part of the organ. The organ-case was of wood, richly carved in the style of the early Renaissance, and Holbein's decorations were painted in brown monochrome in order to produce the effect of similar carving, as though they formed an integral part of the case itself. The organ was restored in 1639, when the doors were repainted by Sixt Ringle, and in 1786 it was replaced by a new one, Holbein's decorations and some of the old carved woodwork being deposited in the Public Library. The doors suffered a second "restoration" in 1842, and in the following year were removed to the Basel Picture Gallery (No. 321).[5] Quite recently much of the over-painting has been removed, and it is possible to obtain a good idea of the noble and decorative effect they must have produced when fresh from Holbein's brush and in the position intended for them. In spite of this careful renovation, however, the damage done to them in earlier days was so severe that much of their original beauty has vanished. The figures are larger than life-size, and produce the effect of carved wood statues. Happily, the original study for them, a very beautiful and powerful pen-drawing washed with brown-black Indian ink, is to be found among the drawings in the Amerbach Collection (Pl. 39).[6] The design is on six vertical strips of paper fastened

[1] Davies, p. 99. [2] Woltmann, 4. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 61–64.
[3] Quoted by Woltmann, vol. i., p. 175.
[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxvii. [5] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 237.
[6] Woltmann, 98. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii., 19, 20; Davies, p. 74; Knackfuss, figs. 62, 63; His, *Desseins*, &c., viii., ix.

together. The peculiar shape of the doors necessitated considerable ingenuity on the part of the artist in the arrangement of his material, and he succeeded admirably in adapting the spaces to his purpose. Each door is in three divisions, the innermost being the highest. In the left-hand shutter this inmost space contains the figure of the Emperor Henry II, founder of Basel Minster. In the shorter, outer division stands his wife, Kunigunde, and between them is a representation of the Minster itself. On the right-hand wing the Virgin and Child stand facing the Emperor, and in the outer division, St. Pantalus, the first Bishop of Basel ; between them is a group of small nude singing and playing angels. The spaces above the heads of the Emperor and the Virgin, and the other spaces, triangular in shape, over the central part of each wing, are filled in with Renaissance ornamentation. The four large figures are designed with great nobility, and are very impressive in effect. The horizon lies below the level of the ground, on account of the height at which the doors were to be hung, a frequent practice of Holbein's in his wall-paintings, and an observance of the laws of vision probably brought home to him by his study of Mantegna's works. For this reason the figures are represented as seen from below in effective perspective foreshortening.

The Emperor, with long beard, is shown in profile, crowned, and wearing a royal mantle, a sceptre in his left hand. His Empress, also crowned, carries a large cross in her hands, and stands in the curious Basel manner of those days, with the body thrust forward, and the back bent, as in Holbein's costume studies referred to in a later chapter.[1] The figure of the Virgin is nobly conceived. The Child flings his little arms round her neck, and presses his cheek against hers, while she clasps him closely to her breast with both hands. In carrying out the design, Holbein made one or two slight changes in the position of the Child. In the finished painting the right arm is not flung round the Virgin's neck, but, instead, the hand rests in the bend of her elbow, while their cheeks no longer touch. St. Pantalus, in full ecclesiastical robes and mitre, holds his crozier in his left hand and stretches out the right, as though speaking. The group of small child-angels, three of whom blow trumpets, while four others hold a sheet of music from which they are singing, is a design of the greatest charm, the figures being excellently grouped, and drawn with the

[1] See pp. 157–9.

Art. LVIII. 23

DESIGN FOR THE ORGAN DOORS, BASEL CATHEDRAL

Pen and wash drawing

BASEL GALLERY



utmost freedom. They are sturdy little boys, with curly hair and small wings. One of the singers beats time with a stick, and another does so with his hand. In the finished picture this sheet of music is inscribed with the words from the "Song of Solomon"—"Quam pulchra es amica." The corresponding division of the left wing, representing the exterior of the Minster, is just as free and masterly a study, and the Renaissance ornament which is so cleverly adapted to the remaining spaces is in the finest taste. This decorative filling is not the same on both doors, and it is possible that the artist intended the church authorities to select whichever design they preferred. The one chosen was that on the right-hand door, though the design on the left-hand one with the figure of a nude child among the foliage, is the more beautiful of the two. The whole composition was admirably suited for the purpose for which it was intended, and when the doors were thrown open, and the organ itself was played, the effect produced must have been a fine one. The dignified conception of the four great figures was in perfect keeping with the deep and solemn tones of the organ which they decorated. Neither the doors themselves, nor the design, are dated, but the beauty of the composition and the brilliant and assured technique point to a period towards the end of Holbein's second sojourn in Basel, about 1525, shortly before his departure for England, and they are thus of about the same date as the ten designs in Indian ink made for painted glass, representing scenes from Christ's Passion. Among the monumental works of decorative painting undertaken by him during his second residence in Basel, these designs stand among the highest. The influences which were brought to bear upon his art during his sojourn in Italy find in them their fullest and most dignified expression, happily blended with and modified by those other influences, springing from his native soil, under which he was trained in his father's studio.

CHAPTER VI

THE HOUSE OF THE DANCE AND THE WALL-PAINTINGS IN THE BASEL TOWN HALL

Holbein as a mural decorator—The "Haus zum Tanz"—The "Dance of Peasants" frieze—Original studies and old copies—Decoration of the inner walls of the new Basel Town Council Chamber —"Charondas of Catanea"—"Zaleucus of Locris"—"Curius Dentatus"—"Sapor and Valerian"—The single figures placed between the large compositions—Cessation of the work before its completion.



T this period of his life Holbein's work was by no means confined to the painting of portraits and church pictures. His activity was ceaseless, and every moment of his time must have been fully occupied. In addition to many book illustrations for the publishers, and designs for glass-painters, armourers, and other craftsmen, he found considerable employment in decorating the street-fronts of houses of certain of the leading citizens with large wall-paintings, and, in some instances, painted similar decorations on the inner walls. It is evident from various contemporary and later references that he covered more than one house in Basel with decorative designs in this fashion, and that the art of wall-painting, practised in that city to some extent before his time, received a great impetus from his example. He carried it to a far greater pitch of excellence than had been achieved until then in any country but Italy, and founded a school of monumental decorative design which existed for a considerable period after his death, and has been revived again in modern times in Lucerne, if not in Basel. Unfortunately, nothing remains of his original work in this field except a few isolated designs for one or two façades, and several tracings and inferior copies of fragmentary remains of the actual wall-paintings; nor has any definite record been handed down in Basel of any particular dwelling so decorated by him, with the exception of the "House of the Dance," which obtained a wide celebrity in his own day, and was evidently looked upon as his masterpiece. In carrying out the mural ornamen-

tation of this building he allowed his brilliant fancy full play, and exercised the greatest ingenuity in turning to advantage the wide, flat spaces of the commonplace frontage with its irregularly-placed Gothic arched windows and openings, covering the whole of it with painted Renaissance architecture rich in columns and friezes, balconies and elaborate porticoes and other features, amid which characters from ancient history and fable and modern life were placed with admirable effect.

The " Haus zum Tanz " was so named by his fellow-citizens from the large frieze representing a number of peasants dancing with the wildest merriment and abandon, which at once took the popular fancy, though it only formed a part of the decoration. An original drawing for the narrow front façade still exists, while there is an old tracing of Holbein's study for the general design, and some sixteenth-century copies of his sketches, from which a good idea of the decorative effect produced after he had finished the work can be obtained. It was a corner house, and stood in the Eisengasse, near the Rhine Bridge, and at that time belonged to the wealthy goldsmith Balthasar Angelrot, from whom Holbein received the commission. The decorations, probably carried out by him in 1520, were still visible, and described by Patin, in 1676, but towards the end of the eighteenth century their faded remains were whitewashed over. The old building itself stood until 1907, when it was pulled down and rebuilt.[1]

The plan Holbein pursued shows a marked advance in his conception of decorative design when compared with the earlier paintings of the Hertenstein house in Lucerne. In the latter large pictures filled practically the whole of the wide spaces between the windows, but he now abandoned this practice to a great extent, and subordinated the pictorial effect to one in which architecture played the leading part, the characters introduced appearing as actual figures occupied in various ways amid this elaborate setting. The main front of the house was very irregular in its features. There were no straight lines, for the windows differed greatly in height and breadth, and those of one storey were in most instances not placed exactly over those in the storey below them. To a painter of lesser mastership than Holbein such a nondescript frontage would have greatly increased the difficulties to be overcome in carrying out a successful

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. 246–7.

decorative scheme; in his case the very difficulties appear to have provided an added spur to his imagination and the fanciful play of his humour, and he seized upon them and turned them to the utmost advantage. According to Dr. Ludwig Iselin, in his notes on Holbein written towards the end of the sixteenth century, the painter regarded his work upon Angelrot's house with some amount of satisfaction, for when he revisited Basel in the autumn of 1538, and saw his wall-paintings both on the house-fronts and in the Council Chamber rapidly fading away, he proposed to repaint them at his own expense, and in criticising his work found that the "Haus zum Tanz" was "rather good" ("Das Haus zum tantz wär ein wenig gutt"). According to Theodor Zwinger (1577),[1] he received only forty florins (gulden) for the whole of this work, very inadequate payment even for those days, considering the amount of labour which he must have given to it. This reference of Zwinger's is of great interest, as, with the exception of the wall-paintings in the interior of the Basel Town Hall, it is the only record so far discovered of the prices the artist was in the habit of receiving for such undertakings.

The house, as already stated, was a corner one of three storeys, the left-hand and narrow side being the one which fronted the Eisengasse. The decoration covered both sides, and was painted more or less in perspective, so arranged that the spectator, in order to obtain the full effect of the design, must stand at the corner angle of the house, from which he could see both sides at the same time. On the ground floor he placed on either side of the broad arched windows and the narrower door at the end of the chief façade thick, stumpy columns, with garlands hanging below their Ionic capitals. He made skilful use of the Gothic forms of the openings, as they actually existed, in such a way that the pointed arches appeared to be merely the result of perspective foreshortening, as seen from the spectator's standpoint. Above these arches, in the flat space beneath the first-floor windows, was painted the broad band containing the "Bauerntanz," or "Dance of the Peasants," which gave the house its popular name. This band was broken by a small oblong window over the house-door, which Holbein utilised by turning it into a stone table, with cans and jugs for the refreshment of the dancers, against which two musicians are leaning, one playing the bagpipes and the

[1] *Theodori Zwingeri methodus apodemica*, 1577, p. 199—quoted by Woltmann, i. 149.

other a wind instrument of unusual shape. Boisterous mirth reigns among the dancers. Their flitting shadows are cast upon the wall behind them, as they give full vent to their delight in life by means of measures more energetic than graceful, and much rough-and-tumble play. Judging from the fine original study in the Berlin Print-Room,[1] which shows a part of this frieze, the wall-painting itself must have produced a vivid effect of rapid, lifelike movement, and even of noise and laughter. Above the Dance, decorated pilasters supporting lofty columns, which ran up to the top of the building, were placed between the windows, together with antique figures of Mars, Venus, Cupid, and other gods. Above these again ran a balcony with an open balustrading, supported on projecting cornices, with numerous figures of Holbein's fellow-citizens in contemporary costume walking about and looking over into the street below, one of them with a greyhound. Round the windows of the second floor, which were of varying heights, he gave full play to his delight in Renaissance architecture of a very intricate and fantastic kind, including his favourite round medallions containing the heads of Roman Emperors and other classical heroes and heroines, friezes with rich ornamentation, grotesque figures with human bodies and tails of dolphins, and columns and arches seen in strong perspective. On the top floor of all the small windows were given the appearance of little square towers surrounded by broken and ruined arches and masonry, overgrown with bushes, and behind and between them the blue sky. On one of the walls was a peacock, and on another a paint-pot with the brush stuck in it, as though left up there by accident by the painter after the work had been finished and the scaffolding removed, a pictorial joke which no doubt entertained the passers-by.

The other frontage of the house faced a side street. On the wall nearest the corner Holbein painted a lofty arched doorway, with steps leading to the interior, above which Marcus Curtius, brandishing a battle-axe, was represented on a great white, rearing horse, on the point of plunging into the street, and close below him a Roman soldier in a crouching position, with right arm uplifted in self-protection, as though fearful that the rider would fall upon and crush him. Beyond this doorway there were no windows on the ground-floor, but merely a few small apertures. Holbein covered this surface

[1] Woltmann, 118. Reproduced by Davies, p. 54 ; His, Pl. xxiv. ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 160.

with arches and pillars with festoons, and a low wall below. Over this wall the spectator was supposed to obtain a view of the stabling below the level of the street, with a groom in charge of a fine horse, the latter attached to a ring at the foot of a lofty column, surmounted by a figure of Hebe. Between the windows on the floor above stood a fat and youthful Bacchus, crowned with vine-leaves, and holding a cup in his hand, and at his feet a cask with a second boy asleep against it, and a cat stealing away with a mouse in her mouth. Above this floor the treatment was mainly architectural, following the lines of that on the Eisengasse frontage. The general effect produced by the whole decoration must have been an exceptionally gay and brilliant one, both from the effective manner in which Holbein made free use of the Renaissance style of architecture, and from the joyous life and movement of the numerous figures depicted. The decoration was intended to amuse as well as to delight, and the tricks of perspective, together with a realism the main purpose of which was to deceive the eye, were conceived as a jest which should provide a source of continual interest and merriment to the passing citizens. Such a method of covering house walls had little in common with the work he had seen in Italy, except in the sumptuousness of its setting. Although it may have sinned against many of the right principles of mural decorative art, it nevertheless appealed strongly to the fancy and taste of the Baselers of that day, and "took the town" so completely that it set a fashion which lasted many years. The humour and realism of it, however, were by no means its foremost features; in many ways it must have produced a decorative effect of great beauty and richness. Though he gave free play to his fantastic imagination, he at the same time kept it within reasonable bounds, so that it never offended against good taste, except in a certain freedom of representation in some of the dancing couples, but was always subordinate to the higher aims of his art.

There is a large tracing of the design in the Basel Gallery, which has evidently been taken from Holbein's original drawing, and there are other copies, almost contemporary, of his original studies for portions of the work, one showing the lower part of the side wall with the horse and groom. The Berlin Print Room, as already noted, possesses the very beautiful drawing from Holbein's own hand, which is the original study for the front façade, showing the musicians and

three of the dancing couples of the "Bauerntanz," with which the Basel tracing is in close agreement, while in the Amerbach Collection there is a slighter version, with certain variations, of the upper portion of the Berlin drawing, showing the balcony with figures. It is a chalk and pen drawing, touched with Indian ink.[1] Dr. Woltmann suggested that the man with the flat cap on the extreme left of the balcony in the Berlin drawing, who is looking down into the street, is intended for a portrait of Holbein himself. In addition, the Basel Gallery possesses good copies of the frieze with the dancers (No. 353),[2] and of the portion of the façade with the mounted figure of Marcus Curtius,[3] made by the glass-painter Niklaus Rippel in 1623 and 1590 respectively. Rippel was master of the Basel Painters' Guild in 1587. The "Curtius" drawing is inscribed "in frontispicio domus," and is evidently a faithful transcript of the original; so much so that by its means it is possible to obtain a very adequate idea of the grandeur of Holbein's design, more particularly in the magnificent group of the horse and its armed rider, in which the Mantegnesque influence is unmistakable. Finally, there is in the same Gallery an excellent reconstruction of the whole frontage (No. 352), a water-colour drawing made by H. E. von Berlepsch in 1878, based upon the Berlin study and the sixteenth-century copies of Holbein's sketches.[4]

One or two original studies remain, which were evidently made as designs for exterior wall-paintings of which all record has been lost. There is a slight but masterly washed pen drawing in the Amerbach Collection (Pl. 40 (1)),[5] representing the upper part of a house in which the irregularly-placed windows have been adapted with the greatest skill to suit the purposes of the elaborate scheme of Italian architecture, one part of which is made to recede by a series of flat columns with ornamented capitals seen in sharp perspective, while the other half appears to project, and shows the seated figure of an Emperor, possibly Charlemagne, between two windows, to which Holbein has given rounded arches with a medallion between them containing an antique head. Dr. Ganz is, no doubt, right in his suggestion that this drawing is a study for a scheme of decoration for the façade of

[1] Woltmann, 94. Reproduced by him (woodcut), i. 151.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 162.
[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 161.
[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 159.
[5] Woltmann, 48. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 10; Knackfuss, fig. 41.

the family house of the Amerbachs in the Rheingasse, in Little Basel, and that the figure of the enthroned Emperor is a pictorial representation of the name—"zum Kaiserstuhl"—by which the house was known. Probably Holbein received a commission for its decoration in 1519, at the time he was painting Bonifacius Amerbach's portrait.[1] In the same collection there is a design for a framework to surround an ordinary square-headed window, either for internal or external wall-painting,[2] over which he has thrown an ornamented arch filled in with scalloping, and crowned with a brazier from which flames are blowing. It is supported by pillars of elaborate and fantastic design, broken up into various bands of rich ornament, among them ox skulls with small hanging garlands. At the base, on each side, is a nude figure of a woman with a basket of fire on her head. The window, only one half of which is shown, is supported below with corbels, the central one with a grotesque head with an iron ring suspended from its mouth. A third sketch, for the ground floor of the Hertenstein house, has been already described.[3]

In the collection of drawings in the Louvre there is an elaborately drawn design for the decoration of a house with a narrow frontage and high-pitched gables,[4] which, although not from Holbein's own hand, bears considerable resemblance to his style and methods in carrying out large mural paintings. It may be a contemporary copy of one of his designs, or, perhaps, an original work by one of the clever Basel artists who adopted his manner. The architectural details, however, are characterised by a fantastic play of fancy carried beyond the limits Holbein usually prescribed for himself in work of this nature. Some of them are frankly impossible, and if actually carried out in brick or stone would at once fall to pieces. This element of architectural absurdity is to be seen very clearly in the large capital in the centre supported by a much weaker and smaller one, in the curious thin bands of projecting stonework with circular openings through which all the columns pass, and the equally curious circular vaulting over the door, with round openings through which two cupids bend down in the act of supporting a coat of arms. The

[1] Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, p. 26.

[2] Woltmann, 39. Reproduced by His, Pl. xxii. (i.).

[3] See pp. 68-9.

[4] Woltmann, 235, who regarded it as a genuine example of Holbein's earlier Basel period. Reproduced by His, Pls. xviii.–xx.

1. STUDY FOR A PAINTED HOUSE FRONT WITH THE FIGURE OF A SEATED EMPEROR

Berlin Gallery

2. THE AMBASSADORS OF THE SAMNITES BEFORE CURIUS DENTATUS

1871.

Property of the municipality in the Berlin Town Hall.

Berlin Gallery

1. STUDY FOR A PAINTED HOUSE FRONT WITH THE FIGURE OF A SEATED EMPEROR

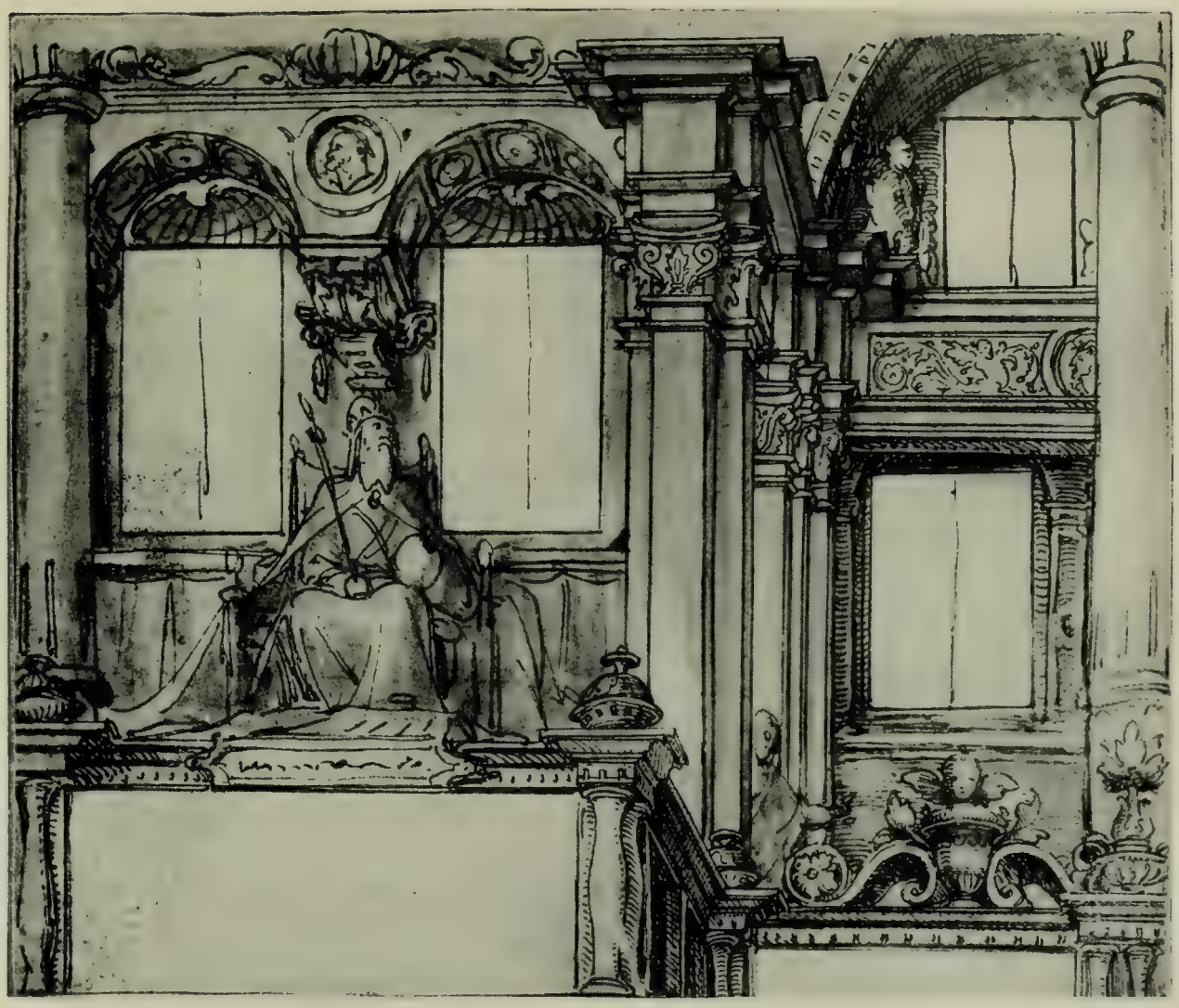
BASEL GALLERY

2. THE AMBASSADORS OF THE SAMNITES BEFORE CURIUS DENTATUS

1521-22

Fragment of the wall-painting formerly in the Basel Town Hall

BASEL GALLERY





principal features of the design are two deep bands divided by the columns into panels containing combats between sirens and grotesque men with fish-like extremities ending in spirals of foliage. On either side of the windows of the second floor double columns are set close together, between which three nude old men are striving to force themselves. On the topmost storey two figures are looking over a balcony in front of two small windows. Medallions with antique heads are freely introduced, and every part of the house-face is so lavishly covered with small ornamentation that the eye becomes confused, and the general effect produced is one of restlessness and over-elaboration. Below the ground-floor window a fictitious opening is shown, in which two large dogs are fighting over a bone. Woltmann suggests that a passage in Dr. Ludwig Iselin's notes has reference to these two animals, and may be taken as some indication that this particular design for house-decoration was Holbein's own, and had been carried out by him in Basel. Iselin says, in speaking of the artist's truthfulness to nature: "He painted a dog, at which dogs running past used to bark." [1]

An old Basel legend, which, like so many other legends, has no evidence to support it, connects Holbein's name with the decoration of another house in Basel—the inn "zur Blume" in the Fischmarktplatz. The story runs that the painter was deeply in debt to the innkeeper, and in order to pay his dues he undertook to cover the outside of the house with frescoes; but the work progressed too slowly for the owner, and Holbein's absences in search of enjoyment were too frequent, so that the former kept a close watch upon him, and threatened to cut off supplies unless he remained at his post. The painter's ingenuity, however, was equal to the emergency. When he was at work high up on the building his body was hidden from the view of those in the street by the scaffolding, but his legs were still in sight, so he painted a fictitious pair on the wall, as though dangling down, with feet crossed; and seeing these, the landlord thought all was well, and so left his artist to his own devices.

The most important work in wall-painting undertaken by him at this period was the decoration of the Council Chamber in the newly-rebuilt Town Hall or Rathaus of Basel. In 1504 it was decided to replace the old building with a new one, and the work was begun

[1] Woltmann, i. 148–9.

in 1508 and completed early in 1521, the Council assembling in it for the first time on the 12th of March in the latter year. The decoration of the interior walls of the chief room was given to Holbein, partly, no doubt, through the influence of his patron, Jakob Meyer, who was still burgomaster, though his troubles were already beginning, and culminated before the close of that year, when he was removed from office. The commission must have been mainly due, however, to the Council's knowledge of Holbein's skill and inventive powers in this branch of art, as shown in the decorations of several house-fronts in the city. The painter continued his work in the Chamber after the deposition of Jakob Meyer and the election of Adelberg Meyer, who was unrelated to his predecessor, to the post of chief magistrate. According to the account books of the Council, the commission was given to the painter on the 15th June 1521, on the day of St. Veit and St. Modestus, and the contract stated that he was to receive 120 gulden for the whole work, and that he was to be paid in advance by the "Drei Herrn," who were the members of the Council who controlled the finances, on the day of the signing of the contract, forty gulden, or fifty Basel pounds, the gulden being equal to one Basel pound and a quarter.[1] The remaining payments, in smaller amounts, were made to him on the 20th July and 14th September 1521, and on the 12th April, 16th June, 31st August and 29th November 1522. He received no money during the winter of 1521–22, when the work, no doubt, would be temporarily suspended owing to the shortness of the days and the lack of good light. This is one of the few instances in which we possess authentic records of the amounts received by Holbein for his work.

The Town Hall, which stood in the market-place, with the house of Jakob Meyer, "zum Hasen," adjoining it on the south, has undergone considerable changes since its building, so that to-day both the exterior and interior are by no means in the same condition as when Holbein was working there. In those days the Council Chamber was an irregular quadrangle, about 34 feet by 65 feet, and only 12½ feet high, and the ceiling was supported by three columns down the centre of the room. The wall fronting the market-place was entirely filled with large windows and the doors leading to the chief staircase, and provided no space for decorative treatment, so that Holbein's

[1] Woltmann, i. 153–4.

work was confined to the three remaining walls, the long one opposite, which was also broken up by two windows and two doors, and the two narrower ones at either end, which were not parallel. Of these latter, the one on the north had a heating chamber and a large stove at one end of it, and was separated from the rest of the hall by a balustrade. The only unbroken wall was at the southern end, next Meyer's house. It was called in the accounts the "back wall," because the visitor turned his back on it on entering the room, and this wall was not decorated by Holbein until after his return from his first visit to England. Taking it altogether, the room was so low and so irregular in its arrangement that it was by no means well suited for carrying out a scheme of mural decoration on a monumental scale; but Holbein triumphed over all difficulties, and produced magnificent results, so far as can be judged from the few studies, tracings, and copies which remain. The subjects selected for representation were divided from one another by richly-ornamented Renaissance columns, so that the room, when finished, appeared to be open on all sides, here looking out upon some landscape, and there into some great hall or palace made to appear vast by the clever use of perspective. Between the principal pictures were placed smaller, single-figure subjects, standing in niches on a somewhat higher level, and forming part of the architectural framework. The subjects of the larger paintings were of the kind then popular north of the Rhine, and were intended, by means of celebrated examples taken from ancient history, to bring home to those who used the room, the absolute necessity of impartial justice in the administration of the affairs of a state or community, and at the same time to indicate the punishment which in most cases is bound to follow the breaking of the law, and to extol the virtues of simplicity and a love of country free from all self-seeking. These subjects, and the Latin inscriptions which accompanied them, were not Holbein's own invention, but were, in all probability, selected for him by such learned friends as Myconius and Beatus Rhenanus.[1]

The only records which remain of this great work, all of which are in the Basel Gallery, consist of a few fragments taken from the walls before the last traces of the paintings had finally faded away; original studies for three of the chief subjects from Holbein's own

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 247.

hand; a few contemporary copies of his designs; and others taken from those parts of the design which could still be discerned at the time when the actual fragments of Holbein's handiwork were cut away from the walls. Unfortunately the paintings themselves had but a short life. Less than fifty years after the last one was completed they were already in a deplorable condition, largely through damp. Probably the three months' interval which elapsed between the completion of the building and the beginning of its decoration was due to the desire to allow the walls to become thoroughly dry; but even this precaution was not sufficient to save Holbein's handiwork from gradual destruction. The walls, possibly from faulty construction, appear never to have become entirely free from moisture, while the paintings were also allowed to suffer from general neglect. Wurstisen in his *Epitome Historiæ Basiliensis*, published in 1577,[1] speaks of them as "delineations of the choicest things by the hand of the German Apelles," but two years later the largest of them was reported to be so terribly injured by the weather that it was in danger of complete destruction. The Council, therefore, commissioned the painter Hans Bock to make a copy of it in oils on canvas, which, when completed, was hung on the wall in front of the original painting. This "large piece," which Bock copied in 1579, was probably the whole of the back wall, containing the "Rehoboam" and the "Samuel and Saul." This work occupied his whole time for twenty-six weeks, and his application for payment for this half-year's work, dated the 23rd November 1579, is to be found among the Basel archives. In it he demands one hundred florins, a sum which the Council evidently considered too great, although it works out at little more than a shilling a day in modern money, a moderate but not a contemptible wage as rates of payment went in those days. Among the reasons Bock gives for asking so much is that far more is really due to a copyist, who has to imitate laboriously the work of another, than to one who paints merely from his own fancy; and he goes on to say that, "among all the Holbein pieces in the painted hall, this is not only the greatest in length, but also contains the most difficult and laborious work, as, besides landscape, there are one hundred faces drawn perfectly or partially, so that I must copy them all piece by piece, besides many horses, weapons, and other

[1] Quoted by Woltmann, i. 152.

things." [1] The details he mentions were only to be found in one of the paintings, that of "Samuel and Saul," though it did not contain nearly one hundred heads, but with the adjoining picture of "Rehoboam," which Bock probably included, the number would be nearly correct.

One hundred years later the wall-paintings were still to be seen, though rapidly deteriorating. They are mentioned by Tonjola (1661), who quotes the various inscriptions which accompanied them,[2] and by Patin (1676), who speaks of the three walls of this hall as painted by Holbein. After this all traces of them were gradually lost, damp and neglect almost obliterating them. They were no longer visible in 1796, for Peter Ochs does not mention them in his description of the Council Chamber.[3] Even Bock's copy seems to have fallen to pieces, and in the end the walls were covered with tapestry hangings, and Holbein's work was completely forgotten. In 1817, however, when some repairs were carried out in the hall, necessitating the removal of the tapestries, a few remaining traces of the original work were discovered. On the fresco of "Charondas," on the north wall, the date 1521 was still legible. Seven fragments of considerable size were saved, from the three paintings of "Rehoboam," "Curius Dentatus," and "Zaleucus," and small copies of the chief remains were made in water-colours by Hieronymus Hess for the art firm of Birmann, and these are now preserved in the Basel Gallery (Nos. 328–332). From such inadequate materials as these it is possible to obtain only a very general idea of the original beauty of this great undertaking. It would be supposed that these mural decorations, painted as they were on interior walls, would have long outlived Holbein's work of a similar nature on the exterior façades of Hertenstein's mansion and the House of the Dance, whereas the contrary was the case, for in both the last named instances the paintings remained in fairly good condition until comparatively modern times. This indicates that the cause of the rapid destruction of the Town Hall decorations was not owing to Holbein's lack of knowledge of the proper methods of fresco painting, but was due solely to bad building on the part of the Council's architect, and, later on, to neglect at the hands of the authorities,

[1] Woltmann, i. 159 (note), and Eng. trans., p. 173. [2] *Basilea Sepulta*, p. 382.
[3] *Geschichte der Stadt und Landschaft Basel*, 1786–1822, vol. v. pp. 394–400.

who made no adequate attempt to preserve works which added so great a distinction to their building.

The four chief subjects painted by Holbein in 1521–22 were—(1) Charondas of Catanea, the law-giver of the city of the Thurii, who had issued a decree forbidding the wearing of arms in the public assembly under pain of death, but himself inadvertently broke the law. Hurrying to the council chamber from a journey, he forgot to leave his weapons behind him ; and on attention being called to this by one of his enemies, he immediately cried out, "By Zeus! the law shall be master," and ran himself through with his sword. (2) Zaleucus of Locris, whose laws punished adultery by the loss of both eyes. His only son was found guilty of this crime, but the people begged him to show mercy, as the culprit was his heir, and their future ruler. Zaleucus resisted their entreaties for a long time, but in the end yielded to the extent of sacrificing one of his own eyes, and ordering only one of his son's to be removed, thus upholding the majesty of the law. (3) Curius Dentatus, who, kneeling before his fire, preparing his modest meal, sends away the ambassadors of the Samnites, who have come with rich presents in order to persuade him to take no part in the war against them. (4) Sapor, king of Persia, who is making use of the body of the captive emperor Valerian as a step from which to mount his horse. Between these pictures were placed single figures of Christ, King David with the harp, Justice, Wisdom, and Temperance. The remaining large subjects, which were painted in 1530–31, were Rehoboam spurning the Elders of Israel, Saul rebuked by Samuel, and possibly Hezekiah breaking the Idols.

In the picture of "Charondas" the action takes place in a lofty hall, its roof supported by richly decorated columns, with long architraves covered with bands of sculptured figures and medallions. Charondas stands in front of the councillors in the act of plunging his sword into his breast, as with uplifted eyes he calls the gods to witness that he is prepared at all costs to uphold the laws. Some of the onlookers sit spell-bound, too overcome with surprise and agitation to attempt to stay his hand, while others are still disputing among themselves as to the necessity or justice of so severe a punishment for so trivial a fault. This is one of the frescoes which Hess copied in 1817,[1] and the Basel Gallery also possesses a contemporary

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 165.

copy of Holbein's original design,[1] which was probably made by some pupil or assistant attached to his own workshop. When the two are compared, it becomes apparent that Holbein, when he came to paint the subject upon the wall, added considerably to its length. Hess's copy is almost twice as long as it is high, and on either side three or four figures have been added to the group of councillors which do not appear in the copy of the first design, which is almost square in its proportions, and corresponds in size with Holbein's original design for the "Sapor" subject.[2]

In the "Zaleucus" the scene is laid in a great chamber with a large arched opening at one end, through which can be seen the outer walls of the palace and other Renaissance buildings illuminated by sunshine. The blinding of the two men is depicted with great realism. The son falls back in his chair, with open mouth and a look of terror on his face as the executioner prepares to tear out his left eye. Opposite to him his father, crowned, in princely robes, an aged man, with long silvery beard, sits in his chair of state, placed in front of heavy tapestry hangings, freely offering himself to the torture. Holbein has very skilfully marked the contrast between the abject fear of the culprit, who appears about to scream aloud, and the old man, who makes ready to meet the sharp pain with dignified restraint, and only displays his feelings in the way in which he grips the arms of his throne. In the case of the son, the executioner, dressed in the body armour of a Roman soldier, is using considerable violence; in that of the father, he is first examining the eye with a lens in order that he may remove it with as little pain as possible. This severe object-lesson in the majesty of the law is witnessed by a great crowd of spectators, all clad in togas, who regard the scene with contending emotions of horror and compassion. Two fragments of the original painting are still preserved at Basel—the head of Zaleucus (No. 331), and that of one of the spectators (No. 332). Of this fresco also there is a water-colour copy at Basel made by Hess from the almost obliterated original,[3] and a sixteenth-century copy of Holbein's design for it.[4] In this case the two copies agree in their proportions, and

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 164.

[2] The head of Charondas was introduced into a glass painting by H. J. Plepp in 1581. See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 247. A badly over-painted fragment with the head from the wall itself is preserved in the Basel Gallery.

[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 167.

[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 166.

indicate that the painting was one of the smaller of the chief subjects with which the room was decorated. According to Dr. Ganz, three other old copies of this wall-painting exist, one by H. R. Manuel in a private collection in France, one by J. Wentz, done in 1551, now in the Basel Collection, and the third in a glass painting of 1580.[1]

Of the picture of "Curius Dentatus" no record remains beyond the water-colour copy made by Hess in 1817,[2] and a fragment of the painting itself in a bad state of preservation, showing the heads of the three foremost of the five Samnite ambassadors (No. 330) (Pl. 40 (2)).[3] From Hess's copy it is to be gathered that this composition must have been an exceptionally fine one, though one of the smallest of the series. The characters are placed under an open portico with round arches through which a wide expanse of country is seen. There is a tall tree in the foreground, and in the distance buildings and a bridge over a river, and a lofty mountain. Curius, dressed in Roman armour, is kneeling in front of his open hearth, cooking his evening repast, and looking round, without rising, at the five ambassadors, who are attired in rich Renaissance dress, and bear golden vessels and a large dish full of gold. Curius, refusing their bribes, points to the turnips he is cooking, and exclaims: "Malo hæc in fictilibus meis esse et aurum habentibus imperare" ("I would rather have these in my pot and rule over those who have gold"). These words were painted over the picture itself. Each one of the larger compositions, as well as the single figures, had similar painted inscriptions in Latin, and other admonitory couplets were placed upon the walls, the text of all of them being given by Tonjola in his *Basilea Sepulta*. The hall in which Curius is receiving the Samnites fills the upper half of the fresco, and is supported on masonry which occupies the lower half, in which is seen the opening to a vaulted chamber or cellar, in front of which stands an armed man, possibly intended to represent the messenger of the Basel Town Council, as he is dressed in the black-and-white armorial colours of the city, and wears a small badge with the city's coat of arms fastened to his shoulder. His right hand is raised to his feathered hat as though he were about to salute the spectator. This picture was intended to glorify republican simplicity, and may have had reference also to the

[1] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 247.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 168.
[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 31.

burning question of the "French pensions," which helped to bring about Jakob Meyer's downfall.[1]

Of the fourth picture, "Sapor and Valerian," the only record remaining is the beautiful design at Basel from Holbein's own hand (Pl. 41).[2] The drawing is lightly washed with water-colour, chiefly red in the faces and the brickwork of the architectural background, and blue and grey in other parts. This picture was one of the narrower ones, and the space was crowded with figures. In the centre, the aged Emperor, crowned, and with a long white beard, kneels on the ground resting on his outspread hands, his body pressed down by the weight of Sapor, who places one foot on his back as he prepares to mount his horse. The latter, like all the other figures, is dressed in the costume of Holbein's own day, with a long sword and a gold chain across his shoulders. The horse is held by a foot-soldier, in a blue cloak, who looks over his shoulder towards the spectator. The space behind the central group is filled with soldiers, mounted and on foot. The knights, some of whom are in full armour, carry long lances over their shoulders, which add to the effect of the scene, while the men on foot hold aloft great pikes. The mounted knight near the centre, with plumes all round his broad hat, is a noble and dignified figure, and the drawing of Sapor's horse is excellent. The procession comes along the street from the right, and passes round the corner of the building, which fills in the background, as in several of the earlier "Cross-Bearing" pictures. This building, which is seen from an angle, with deep arched arcading below and a row of windows above, is a representation of the recently-finished Town Hall of Basel, within which the wall-painting itself was placed, and the quaint building next to it, with its battlemented cresting seen against the blue sky, is to be found marked on Matthaeus Merian's plan of the city (1615). It was in reality separated by two other houses from the Rathaus, but Holbein, attracted no doubt by its picturesqueness, has moved it nearer. Over Sapor's head is a large ribbon label inscribed "Sapor Rex Persar," and below the Emperor is written "Valerianus Imp." On either side are shown the pillars which divided the chief compositions from each other; flat columns, the

[1] Woltmann, i. p. 157.

[2] Woltmann, 47. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 13, and also in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. xi., and *Holbein*, p 163.

upper half covered with carving of Renaissance design, and the lower with slabs of coloured marbles and a circular medallion containing an antique head such as is to be found in almost all Holbein's architectural drawings. An inscription at the foot, which runs, "Hans Conradt Wolleb schanckts Mathis Holzwartenn," gives the names of two consecutive owners of this drawing. Wolleb, who was Magistrate of Basel, died on September 9, 1571. On August 6th of that year the Alsatian poet, Matthias Holzwart, permitted a performance of his play, *King Saul and the Shepherd David*, to be given in the Basel market-place, and Wolleb may have presented the drawing to him at that time in recognition of the event. The same border also contains the letters A.V.E. in a monogram, probably the initials of a third owner of the design.[1]

The five single figures in painted niches which filled in the smaller spaces on the walls had each an appropriate inscription in Latin. The Basel Gallery possesses copies of Holbein's preliminary studies for each one of them, which, like the similar copies of the Charondas and Zaleucus designs, are drawn on paper made in Basel with a water-mark which was not used after 1524, thus showing that they must be contemporary, and, as already suggested, very possibly done by some one in Holbein's own studio.[2] Christ[3] is represented holding a long tablet with the words: "Quod tibi non vis fieri alteri non facias" ("What thou dost not wish to be done to thee, that do to no other"). In the band of ornament at his feet is a small tablet with the date 1523. King David[4] is shown with his harp, and a scroll over his head with "Juste judicate filii hominum" ("Judge justly, ye sons of men"). Justice,[5] crowned, stands beneath an open arch behind a balustrade, with her balance at her feet. With her sword, grasped in her right hand, and with the forefinger of her left, she is pointing to a large tablet suspended from the top of the arch, which contains the inscription: "O vos reigentes obliti privatorum publica curate" ("O ye rulers, forget your private affairs, and care for those of the public"). Wisdom[6] is shown in a shell-crowned niche. She has a double face, and her long hair falls below her waist. In

[1] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to i. 13.
[2] See Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 247.
[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 171.
[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 171.
[5] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 169.
[6] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 170.

SAPOR AND VALERIAN

Design for one of the wall paintings in the Basel Town Hall

Pen and water-colour drawing

Basel Gallery


SAPOR REX PERSAR
VALERIANVS · IMP

her left hand she holds a torch, and in her right a book with the inscription, "Inicium sapiencie timor domini" ("The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"). A scroll over the torch bears the words, "Experiri prius consilio quam armis prestat" ("It is better to try by counsel than by arms"). Finally, Moderation [1] is represented as a young woman with long, clinging garments, in the act of pouring wine from a large vessel of blown glass into a small flagon. The admonition in her case runs, "Qui sibi plus licere vult quam deceat sue studet ruine" ("He who wishes to enjoy more than is his due, acts to his own destruction"). Other inscriptions quoted by Tonjola appear to refer to further paintings, possibly single figures only, of which, however, no traces remain. The compositions on the "back wall," with subjects from the Old Testament, painted some eight years afterwards, are described in a later chapter.[2]

While Holbein was carrying out the earlier paintings, the sculptor Martin Lepzelter was also at work in the Council Chamber. He carved two half-length figures of prophets and four coats of arms for the pillars which supported the ceiling, for which he was paid eight Basel pounds on August 3, 1521.[3]

When, on the 29th November 1522, on the Saturday before St. Andrew's Day, Holbein received a final payment of twenty-two Basel pounds and ten shillings, which was the balance of the 120 gulden he was to receive for the whole work, he had completed two walls of the Council Chamber, and he felt that he had more than earned the amount of his commission, although the back wall was still untouched. He, therefore, made representations to the Council to this effect, and they appear to have felt the justice of the claim, as they could hardly have failed to do, when they saw in how brilliant a manner the completed portion had been carried out. In consequence, they agreed that he had fully earned the money, and ordered the balance to be paid to him, deciding "to let the back wall alone till further orders." [4] In any case, as the winter had begun, it would have been necessary to postpone the completion of the work until the following spring, and, no doubt, it was the original intention that Holbein

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 170.

[2] See pp. 347–50.

[3] See Woltmann, i. p. 158 (note); Eng. trans., p. 172 (note).

[4] "Vnnd dwyl die hindere wand noch nit gmacht vnnd gemolet ist, vnnd er vermeint an dysem das gelt verdient habenn, sol man dieselbig hindere want bis vff wytherenn bescheit lossenn an ston."—Der Dreyer Herren Gedenkbüchlein. (Woltmann, i. 159.)

should finish the room as soon as the season permitted. For some reason, however, nothing was done in the matter until after his return from his first visit to England. Possibly the Council were too busily occupied in attempting to keep order in a city in which the spread of the new opinions brought about by the Reformation was already dividing the townsfolk into two separate camps. In the spring of 1522, also, Basel was engaged in several military enterprises, which would cause the Council to hesitate before spending money upon such luxuries as art, which could be dispensed with until times were less critical and the city's affairs more prosperous.

CHAPTER VII

DESIGNS FOR PAINTED GLASS AND OTHER STUDIES

Holbein's work as a designer for the glass-painters—Eight panels of saints—The "Prodigal Son"—The "Two Unicorns"—Designs with landsknechte at Berne, Basel, Berlin, and Paris—Heraldic drawings for Erasmus and others—Designs showing the influence of North German art—"Virgin and St. John"—The "Annunciation"—"St. Elizabeth"—"Virgin and Child with kneeling donor"—The great "Passion" series—Studies of costumes of Basel ladies—"St. Adrian"—Studies from the nude—"A Fight"—Animals.



N addition to his commissions, both public and private, for wall-paintings, Holbein was frequently employed in the preparation of designs for artificers in more than one branch of decorative art. The Amerbach Collection is rich in works of this class, more particularly in designs for glass windows. It must be remembered in studying these "scheibenrisse" that they were intended for painted, and not for stained, glass. The older method of employing translucent glass of various tints, in which the colour is incorporated in the body of the glass itself, so that the window depended for its beauty on its transparency, had already become, in the Switzerland of Holbein's day, a little-practised and, in some districts, an almost forgotten art, its place being taken by glass, usually white, on which the design was painted in enamel colours and afterwards permanently fixed by refiring. Such glass-painting produced the effect of a semi-opaque design on a translucent ground, and, beginning merely with a few brown lines to indicate the features, or the patterns on a dress, it had gradually developed, in Germany and Switzerland, into a method of pictorial representation which imitated as closely as possible a painted picture, and was, therefore, in marked contrast to the older and more beautiful art, in which the great aim of the artist was to produce a lovely effect of transparent colour. In the newer method, which in reality was opposed to the true nature of the medium employed, but which nevertheless became a thing of beauty when designed by a master, small panels, as a rule, were used, which were surrounded by plain white glass, so that they had the appearance of little pictures

set in the middle of a window. The panels being small ones, and the subjects on them drawn on a small scale, it was necessary that the panes should be placed near the ground so that they could be properly seen, and this, again, made it essential that the draughtsmanship should be as careful and delicate as possible, design having usurped the place of colour. These glass paintings were usually surrounded by a framework of a decorative nature which divided them sharply from the plain glass around them, and helped still more to produce the effect of a picture. The lines of leadwork, which, in the older method, held the pieces of vari-coloured glass together, were abandoned as much as possible, as they naturally marred the delicate pictorial effect of the work, and were sometimes confined to the boundary lines of the panel. Under such conditions it was natural that the glass-workers should turn to artists for their supply of designs, since accurate draughtsmanship was now all-important.

Holbein, who was largely employed by the Basel glaziers and glass-painters for this purpose, made the freest and finest use of this new convention in the decoration of windows. The convention was, no doubt, a wrong one, and in the end all but extinguished the older and more beautiful art, but Holbein took it as he found it, and brought to it all his mastery of design and purity of line, so that the panels he produced were of great beauty and fine decorative effect. In his day glass-painting was no longer confined to the services of the Church, but was introduced into the windows of all private houses of importance, usually in the form of single panes with the householder's coat of arms, or with sacred or profane subjects, according to his tastes. Thus he had many opportunities of showing his skill in this form of decoration, and he made use of a great variety of subjects. In some instances, such as the "Passion" series described below, the treatment is frankly pictorial, and the decorative effect is confined to the framework of Renaissance architecture within which the subject is set; but in others, and more particularly those intended for the display of shields with armorial bearings, the design becomes largely a decorative one, in which the artist gives free play to his imagination and taste for ornamentation in the Italian manner. Whatever the subject, however, each drawing displays wonderfully free yet delicate draughtsmanship, skilful arrangement of the design in the space to be filled, and extraordinary facility of invention.

The studies appear often to have been made to the exact size of the panel they were to decorate, and, as a rule, Holbein left the question of colour to the taste of the glass-painter; in a few cases, however, he indicated it by the addition of one or two slight tints. There can be little doubt that they were carried out largely in that combination of pale yellow for the higher lights and brown or grisaille for the darker portions and shadows which was the customary practice in Switzerland at that period, with touches of more positive colour here and there in the dresses of the figures, the landscape backgrounds, and the coats of arms. The designs are in most cases drawn with the reed pen and washed with Indian ink.

Only two or three of these designs, of which some thirty or more are in existence, are dated, and, with the exception of four or five made during his sojourn in Lucerne,[1] they were all produced between the years 1519 and 1525 or 1526. Among the earliest are eight panels of Saints at Basel (Nos. 333–40),[2] which were designed in pairs, and were to be placed side by side in the two divisions of a single window, the architectural framework and background in which the figures are set corresponding in almost all details in each pair of designs, so that it is evident that they were intended to be seen together, forming between them a complete picture. They were probably produced for the decoration of some large hall, or the aisle of a church. Two other drawings belonging to the same series are contemporary copies after Holbein from the hand of some follower, one of which bears the date 1520 and the coat of arms of the town of Basel, proving that the designs were made, most probably towards the close of 1519, shortly after his return from Lucerne. They appear to have been done for the cloisters at Wettingen.

The first pair represent the Virgin standing with the Infant Jesus in her arms,[3] in the left division, and some prince of the Church in the robes of a bishop in the right.[4] This last figure has been described as that of St. Pantalus, the patron saint of Basel, but there is little resemblance in expression to the fine head of that bishop in Holbein's design for the organ shutters in the minster. Here the face is full of arrogance, rather than piety, and the prelate bears himself proudly

[1] See pp. 78–9, and Appendix (B). [2] Woltmann, 82–89.
[3] Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 22; His, Pl. xvii.
[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 35; His, Pl. xvi.

as though conscious of his exalted position. His mitre and ecclesiastical robes are richly embroidered and ornamented. A marked peculiarity in the drawing of all the figures in this series is their appearance of stumpiness, the legs being too short for the bodies. A similar defect is to be noted in some of Holbein's earlier designs for book ornaments. In the case of these glass designs it may have been that they were to be enlarged afterwards by the glass-painter, and placed at some height from the floor, and that Holbein, therefore, attempted foreshortening. This, however, is not very probable, as all his designs for this purpose seem to have been intended for small paintings, to be placed near the eye, and it is much more likely that this characteristic of his figures was a fault, also to be noticed in his earlier woodcut designs, of which he afterwards broke himself. The two in question are placed in an architectural setting of a somewhat fantastic design, with large open arches through which an extensive mountainous landscape is seen. Below the hills, on the right of the bishop, are the houses of a village and a stone crucifix by the wayside, and on the left a torrent rushing down a mountain gorge crowned with trees, and forming a large waterfall under a bridge of one wide arch where the stream joins the plain. The same landscape is continued in the background of the panel of the Virgin and Child, the river wandering away through another gorge among the hills on the left. This view is strongly reminiscent of the St. Gotthard district and the Devil's Bridge over the Reuss, and affords some slight additional proof of Holbein's expedition across the Alps.[1]

A second pair represent St. Anna with the Virgin and Child, and St. Barbara.[2] Here again the unusual shortness of the figures is very apparent. St. Barbara, who is dressed in the rich costume of a Basel lady of the sixteenth century, stands in the characteristic attitude, with the upper part of her body bent backwards, and the heavy dress held up in front by the hand, as is the case in each one of the series of studies of ladies' costumes by Holbein to be described later, which thus appears to have been the customary habit of walking at that time. The setting is less fantastic and elaborate than in the two panels just described, and consists in each of an open arch supported by pillars, with sculptured figures above the capitals.

[1] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 35.

[2] Reproduced by Knackfuss, figs. 23, 24.

Although the details of the ornamentation of the columns do not exactly agree in the two designs, they are evidently a pair. On the left-hand panel, as in the one on the same side in the preceding set, there is an empty shield for a coat of arms, and the background is also a mountainous landscape, though drawn in less detail. In the design of St. Catherine,[1] which forms one of a pair with St. John the Baptist, the background is almost entirely filled with a building with pointed arches supported by short pillars, but on the left a narrow strip of landscape is visible, with an archway or bridge across a road with a building on the far side of it, and distant mountains behind. The face of the saint is a very charming one, and her hair falls in elaborate ringlets down her back, and is surmounted with a jewelled crown. In the pair representing St. Andrew and St. Stephen, Dr. Ganz recognises, in the arcading with flat pilasters and shallow scallop-crowned niches in front of which the saints are standing, an architectural motive taken from the cathedral of Como.[2] There is no need to describe every figure in this series in detail, each one of which wears a halo, a symbol of which Holbein afterwards made very little use.

Two other designs for painted glass in the Basel Gallery are of about the same date as these eight sheets with figures of saints, and were done in the earlier years of his second Basel period, either in 1519 or 1520. One represents the "Prodigal Son," and the other is an heraldic device with two unicorns supporting a shield. The former is a very effective design, in which the Prodigal Son is shown tending a herd of swine (Pl. 42 (2)).[3] He strides along, barefooted, in ragged clothes, through which his bare knees protrude, his long staff on his shoulder, and his short sword grasped in his left hand. His head is turned towards the spectator, and there is a look of misery and despair on his face. The animals he is driving have come to a halt round the trunk of a large oak tree which fills the greater part of the left-hand side of the sheet, and is one of the most considerable pieces of tree-drawing Holbein ever designed. Some of the pigs are devouring the fallen acorns; others raise their snouts as though expecting the food to drop from the branches into their mouths. Their keeper,

[1] Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 25.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 8.
[3] Woltmann, 101. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 24.

whose miserable thoughts are far away from his task, unconsciously thrusts the end of his staff into the eye of one of the herd. The background is a landscape of wide expanse, with a large walled-in building with farm outhouses on the bank of a river in the middle distance, and a range of mountains on the horizon. The whole is surrounded by a simple framework consisting of a single arch supported by pillars, with two nude sculptured figures in the angle above the capitals. The rather weak and wavering line of the flattened arch, and the similar hesitating double spiral which runs round the pillars, together with the very simple ornamentation of arch, capitals and bases, indicate that the design is quite an early one, though the drawing of the figure and the accompanying animals is excellent and full of character. An empty shield for a coat of arms is placed in the right-hand corner against the column, and a flat space is left below for an inscription.

The sheet with the two unicorns [1] is much more elaborate in its architectural treatment, and is a design of great decorative effect. The two beasts stand on their hind-legs, and support with their fore-legs an empty shield of Italian fashion. The animals themselves are realistically drawn, and are not treated merely as conventional heraldic beasts, the sense of reality being increased by the head of the one on the left, which is turned round over its back, so that the horns of both point in the same direction, but at different angles. They are placed beneath a very richly-decorated edifice which Holbein appears to have taken from one of the monumental tombs to be seen in many of the cities of Northern Italy. The principal feature is a barrel-shaped wooden roof, supported by a flattened arch and double pillars at the sides and in the centre. At either side of this roof-like structure rise short chimneys of Italian design, and above it is a deep frieze with Renaissance carvings supported by three short pillars. As Dr. Ganz points out,[2] the design has features in common with the fine tomb of Andrea Fusina, now in the Archæological Museum in Milan, while the three sculptured antique heads which crown the lower columns have their counterpart both in the Certosa of Pavia and the church of S. Maria delle Grazie in Milan. The whole design, in fact, so closely resembles in its elaborate architecture these Renaissance

[1] Woltmann, 93. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 9; His, Pl. iii.

[2] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 9.

TWO LANDSKNECHTE

Design for painted glass

THE PRODIGAL SON

Design for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





monuments, that it is impossible to believe that it was the result of Holbein's imagination alone, but rather was due to personal knowledge and actual study. In the landscape background is seen a country château with a projecting tourelle.

Among these designs for painted glass there is a considerable group in which the mercenary soldier or landsknecht of Holbein's day forms the chief subject. These warriors are introduced as heraldic supporters of shields, and were intended, no doubt, for the use of burghers and nobles who had seen military service, while others were designed for the city authorities. The fact that in most cases the shields are left blank shows that Holbein produced them as stock patterns for the glass-painters, which could be adapted to the use of any customer who desired a military subject for his window. In these designs Holbein has made effective use of the picturesque and sumptuous dress and richly-decorated weapons these bold and reckless fighting-men affected. One of the earliest of them in point of date is in the Historical Museum of Berne.[1] It is, unfortunately, only the lower half of a design, of which the remaining portion is now lost. Only the legs, the lower part of the body, and the left hand, with which the landsknecht grasps his sword, are seen, together with part of the shaft of his lance. His right foot is hidden by a large shield containing the coat of arms of the city of Basel. The bases of the columns on either side very closely resemble those in the glass design of the " Prodigal Son," which places the date at about 1520. The soldier is represented as standing on a platform above the river Rhine, and down below, seen between and on either side of his outstretched legs, is a distant landscape, drawn in a free and masterly manner, of exceptional interest on account of its elaborate detail. Across the rapidly-flowing river stretches a wide tressel bridge supported on wooden piers, which leads to an arched gateway in a high tower. Along the river bank, on either side of the bridge, are a number of houses, and behind them a town within steep fortified walls, with many buildings huddled together, and a church tower rising above the surrounding roofs. In the distance ranges of snow mountains close in the view. Trees and a high rock on the near side of the water fill the background on the left-hand side of the design. The view Holbein has thus shown is by no means an exact represen-

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 49.

tation of Basel as seen from across the water, but is rather the simplified type of a Rhine town of his day. It is not improbable that the artist, in addition to the wall-paintings in the new Town Hall, also supplied designs for the windows in some of the rooms, in which case this fragment of a drawing, which contains the city coat of arms, may very possibly have formed a part of such decoration.[1]

The other sheets with landsknechte were produced some few years after the Berne study, though, according to an old copy of one of them, not later than 1524. In most of them the motive consists of two warriors supporting an empty shield between them. It was first used by Holbein in 1517 in a glass painting for Hans Fleckenstein of Lucerne,[2] and was followed a year or two afterwards by the beautiful design in the Basel Gallery and the still later and equally beautiful study in the Berlin Print Room. The date of the last-named drawing can be fixed with some certainty from an old copy which is inscribed 1523. The example at Basel (Pl. 42 (1)) [3] must have been done shortly after the completion of the wall-paintings of the Hertenstein house. In the decorative details of the architectural setting it bears a close resemblance to the glass design of the Madonna with the view of Lucerne in the background, of the year 1519, while the warrior on the right is seen again in an early glass design in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.[4] The double columns carrying the arch in the Basel drawing are richly ornamented, and at the base are supported by a number of small nude sculptured figures. Festoons of laurel leaves and ribbons hang down from the arch—a feature to be found in many of these designs—and in the angles over the capitals are round medallions with antique heads, which was also a favourite decorative motive with Holbein, and, as already noted, is rarely missing from any of his Renaissance frameworks. The two landsknechte wear breastplates over their gay attire, and large slouched hats with many feathers. The one on the left, a bearded man, carries sword and dagger, and holds a battle-axe on his shoulder; the one on the right, clean shaven, leans upon the shaft of his lance. The two figures are splendidly conceived and drawn with the greatest

[1] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to ii. 49.

[2] See also Appendix (B).

[3] Woltmann, 92. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 36; Knackfuss, fig. 37; His, Pl. i.

[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 7.

force and truth ; and the whole design affords proof of how considerable an effect his stay in Lucerne and his short visit to Northern Italy had upon his art, and of the extraordinarily rapid manner in which his genius for decorative design, and his delight in the invention of these settings of Renaissance architecture, developed under these new influences. The background of this particular design, which, according to Dr. Ganz, is strongly reminiscent of the country in the Vierwaldstättersee, shows the tall tower of some village church, the lower part of which is hidden by the beautifully-designed Italian shield which the two warriors support, situated in a hilly landscape, with the sharp peaks of a range of mountains in the distance.

A similar background is shown in the design in the Berlin Print Room,[1] though only the red roof of the church tower appears above the shield. This drawing has been touched with colour in places, the faces of the two landsknechte with red, and also the roofs of the houses of the village seen in the distance, the landscape with green and brown, while colour is also used in several of the decorative details, such as the festoons hanging from the wide flattened arch. The attitudes of the two shield-bearers are more natural and less forced than in the Basel sheet. They are dressed in the same fashion, the man on the right wearing his large feathered hat fastened to his back, and leaning on a large pike held with both hands. The soldier on the left, an exceedingly graceful figure, with a long lance placed point downwards, rests one hand on the shield, and with the other touches his sword hilt. The architectural setting is similar in general design to that of the Basel example, though here the arch is supported by pairs of short slender columns, with sculptured figures of Judith and Lucretia standing on the capitals, and above them Samson and Hercules, while a long frieze over the arch contains a battle of nude foot soldiers and horsemen, in the midst of a shallow stream.

In another drawing in the Basel Gallery,[2] the shield, a fine heraldic design, completely fills the right-hand side of the sheet. It contains a coat of arms consisting of two pears hanging from a branch and a star on either side, and, surmounting the shield, a helmet with large upstanding wings, between which is placed a branch with a single

[1] Woltmann, 119. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 36 (in colours); His, Pl. xv.
[2] Woltmann, 96. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 35.

pear, elaborate scroll-work falling on either side. On the left stands a fierce-looking landsknecht, with his plumed hat on his back, and a great two-handed sword upon his shoulder. Over the crown of the arch, but not forming part of the architectural design, is a battle scene with four men fighting, two with long lances and one with a gun. This drawing, which is a most effective one, is signed " H.H." The design in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris,[1] appears to be one of the earliest of all, produced during his stay in Lucerne. It is evident, from the figure on the left-hand side, that it was ordered in celebration of a wedding, the richly-dressed young lady wearing a bridal crown being the newly-wedded wife of the landsknecht standing on the right. Each one supports a shield with a coat of arms, the woman's consisting of three arrows, and the man's of an anchor. The soldier, with long pike over his shoulder, has a strong facial likeness, as already mentioned, to the warrior on the right of the Basel design, while the face of his wife is of the same type as the head in the Louvre study for the Solothurn " Madonna." In the background is a castle on a precipitous rock by the side of a lake, shut in by a mountain range. The framework consists of two columns with grotesque heads in the capitals, supporting some elaborate scroll-work in place of an arch. Several other drawings in which these mercenaries form the subject are in existence,[2] including a study from life of a seated landsknecht at Berlin,[3] which was formerly in the Lawrence and Suermondt Collections.

A glass design at Basel (No. 341), remarkable for the beauty and freedom of its luxuriant Renaissance scroll design, and also for its fine architecture, bears the date 1520 (Pl. 43).[4] This design is without supporting figures, the whole of the centre of the sheet being filled with a blank shield, surmounted by two helmets with elaborate crests, one with the rampant body of a winged goat, and the other with a pair of curved trumpet-shaped horns. From them flows, down either side of the shield, a mass of beautifully-drawn scroll and leaf ornament. This elaborate coat of arms, designed for a married couple, is placed in an architectural setting resembling a Romanesque church portal. The circular arch is supported by six pillars on either side. At the base of the two nearer ones kneel warriors in Roman armour, sup-

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 7. [2] Appendix (B).
[3] Woltmann, 121. [4] Woltmann, 49. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 24.

DESIGN FOR PAINTED GLASS

With the Coat of Arms of the Von Hewen Family

1520

Basel Gallery


ANNO DOM
M·D·XX·

porting a blank tablet for some inscription; above each is a small blindfolded and trumpet-blowing cupid, with a body ending in foliated scrolls, and on the capitals stand sculptured figures of Mercury and Cronos, the devourer of mankind, resting on his scythe, and about to swallow a small naked child. Behind their heads are two tablets, chained to the crown of the arch, one inscribed "MERCHVRIVS EIN PLONET," and the other, "ANNO DOMINI · M · D · XX · H." The upper moulding of the arch is filled with small sculptured figures of saints, kings, warriors, and others of humbler rank. In the lower right-hand corner is written "d he' von Hewen," showing that the design was made for a member of the noble family of Von Hewen, who was probably a churchman, and, judging from the inscription round the helmet on the right—"DHIOEQV"—a knight of the Order of St. John. Dr. Ganz suggests,[1] therefore, that the orderer of the glass was Wolfgang von Hewen, Canon of Trier, Strasburg, and Chur, who became Rector of Freiburg University in 1504. There is in the Basel Gallery a companion drawing with the coat of arms of the Von Andlau family, which, however, is not so fine a design.[2]

Another and still more elaborate design of a like nature, and of the same year, 1520, was made for Georg von Massmünster, Abbot of Murbach, of which the original glass painting is in a private collection in Basel.[3] The coat of arms which fills the centre of the panel is surmounted by a mitre between two croziers, and many small putti and other figures are introduced into the architectural setting.

Another purely heraldic drawing may be mentioned here, although not intended for reproduction as a glass painting. It contains the arms of a compatriot of Holbein's, Petrus Fabrinus of Augsburg, who became Rector of Basel University.[4] It is painted in gouache on vellum, and was done for insertion in the Matriculation Book of the University in 1523. The arms are placed in front of a Renaissance portico, supported by two columns of green marble, and with a triangular pediment, over which is a flaming brazier, while two naked cupids are seated on the capitals of the columns. In the angles of the arch are two medallions with antique crowned heads. A yellow curtain hides the whole of the lower part of

[1] *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 24.
[2] See Appendix (D).
[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxi.
[4] Woltmann, 112. Reproduced by His, Pl. v.; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 30.

the background. The left half of the shield shows three roses on a blue ground, and the right three fishes on black. It is crowned with a helmet, from which springs the figure of a Moor in parti-coloured dress, who holds in either hand, attached to ribbons from his turban, the three roses and the three fish.

Another heraldic drawing for glass-painting is of particular interest because it was designed by Holbein for Erasmus.[1] It represents the truncated form of the god Hermes as Terminus within an arch supported by single columns, standing in a wide, undulating landscape. The statue is turned three-quarters to the left, the head surrounded by rays, the eyes looking upwards. Over the head, suspended by ribbons from the arch, hangs a large wooden tablet for an inscription, placed slantwise, like the figure below it. The latter bears a considerable likeness to Erasmus himself. The setting is unusually simple, both pillars and arch being almost devoid of ornament, with the exception of a panel with roughly-indicated winged figures terminating in floriated scrolls, and two roundels with the customary heads in the angles of the arch. The background, which consists of some open fields, with a tree or two, one distant house, and hilly country beyond, the whole indicated with a few lines and touches of green colour, slight as it is, shows to advantage Holbein's knowledge of landscape perspective. There is a freedom and simplicity in the drawing, a dignity of conception, and a fine sense of proportion, which indicate that it is one of the latest in date of his drawings for glass, and that it was most probably made shortly before his departure for England in 1526. Erasmus adopted Terminus, the god of boundaries and established ways, as his symbol after Alexander Stuart, Archbishop of St. Andrews, had presented him, when in Italy, with a gold ring set with a cornelian on which was engraved the figure of Hermes and the motto "CONCEDO NULLI";[2] and this motto Holbein has placed in large letters across the sky of the drawing on either side of the head. Thus the design, by means of the symbols used, suggests the character of the philosopher himself, a man who in the opinions he held would yield to no man, and yet in his writings confined himself to established ways, and broke few boundaries. This drawing is in the Amerbach Collection.

[1] Woltmann, 102. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 38; His, Pl. iv.

[2] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 38.

In the British Museum there is a glass design representing a Wild Man of the Woods, drawn with the brush and washed with Indian ink and a slight colour wash.[1] It represents a naked bearded man, with a defiant look, his head and loins girt with forest leaves, holding an uprooted sapling in his hands, and with feet planted apart. He stands on a stone ledge forming the sill of a window, decorated with pilasters and garlands in the Renaissance style and opening upon a hollow among mountains covered with pines. It was purchased in 1895 with the Malcolm Collection, and is an exceedingly fine drawing. Sandrart appears to have possessed a copy of it.

Two glass designs, one in the Basel Gallery and the other in Paris, show that though Holbein at this period of his life was strongly influenced by North Italian art, yet the earlier influence of such German painters as Grünewald and Hans Baldung Grien, gained through a study of their great altar-pieces, had by no means been completely overshadowed. For some years at least after he had become a citizen of Basel these two divergent forces in his development both made themselves felt in varying degrees in much of his work, so that it is not at all easy to arrange in chronological order the large number of decorative designs and other works he produced at this time. This double influence can be easily traced in these "scheibenrisse" of "Christ on the Cross between the Virgin and St. John," and "The Annunciation." In the former[2] the influence of Grünewald is to be seen in the two standing figures, in both of which, and more particularly in that of St. John, the acute grief which overpowers them as they gaze on the crucified Christ is strongly, even violently, depicted. St. John, by the agitated movements of his whole body, his extended fingers, and his open mouth, shows how passionately he is suffering. The framework which surrounds them is over-decorated with a conglomeration of Renaissance motives. The side columns are covered, and their form almost hidden, by masses of plastic ornament, writhing snakes round the bases, and above them grotesque heads with long tassels hanging from their mouths; and, higher up, sculptured figures of a sphinx-like nature. In contrast to this, the background is filled with one of his naturally-

[1] British Museum, 13, Binyon Catg., ii. p. 329. Woltmann, 209.

[2] Woltmann, 95. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 53 (see note to the plate by Meyenburg).

treated landscape scenes, with a high rock on the right behind St. John, from which a tree is growing, and on the left a glimpse of a town by a lake, with mountains beyond and a cloudy sky overhead.

The " Annunciation " drawing, in the collection of M. Léon Bonnat, Paris,[1] shows so many points in common with Grünewald's altar-piece at Isenheim, not only in the general arrangement of the figures, but in numerous details, that it seems evident that Holbein must have been well acquainted with it.[2] As his father was working at Isenheim for some considerable time, it is exceedingly probable that his sons, even if they did not accompany him directly there from Augsburg, as the first stage on their journey to Basel, paid him one or more visits, for the distance between the two places was not great. Holbein has placed the kneeling Mary on one side of a wooden chest on which rests a cushion with her book ; on the other side the Angel of the Annunciation has just alighted, an imposing winged figure, very richly and elaborately dressed, holding a long sceptre in one hand, and the other outstretched towards the Virgin. The latter is by no means one of Holbein's most pleasing representations of the Mother of our Lord ; it is to the angel the eye turns as the centre of interest. The Romanesque pillar and frieze behind the Virgin is a motive taken from the crypt of the Minster of Basel, while the wooden barrel roof of the chamber at the back, in which the Virgin's bed is placed, was common in Holbein's day throughout Switzerland in council chambers, courts of justice, and other large rooms.[3] The architectural framework resembles that of the " Crucifixion " drawing in the lavishness of its somewhat incongruous ornamental details. The bases of the columns are sheathed with grotesque heads from which spring large foliated scrolls, supporting wicker baskets filled with fruit and leaves. Dr. Ganz gives the date of the drawing as about 1521 or 1522.

In composition and technique the foregoing drawing resembles a design for a glass painting in the Basel Collection, representing " St. Elizabeth " (Pl. 44),[4] like the last named touched with bistre. The figure of the saint is placed within a semicircular niche, round which run a number of slender, decorated pillars, apparently of wood, which

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 54, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 13. See his notes to both plates.

[2] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 54.

[3] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 54.

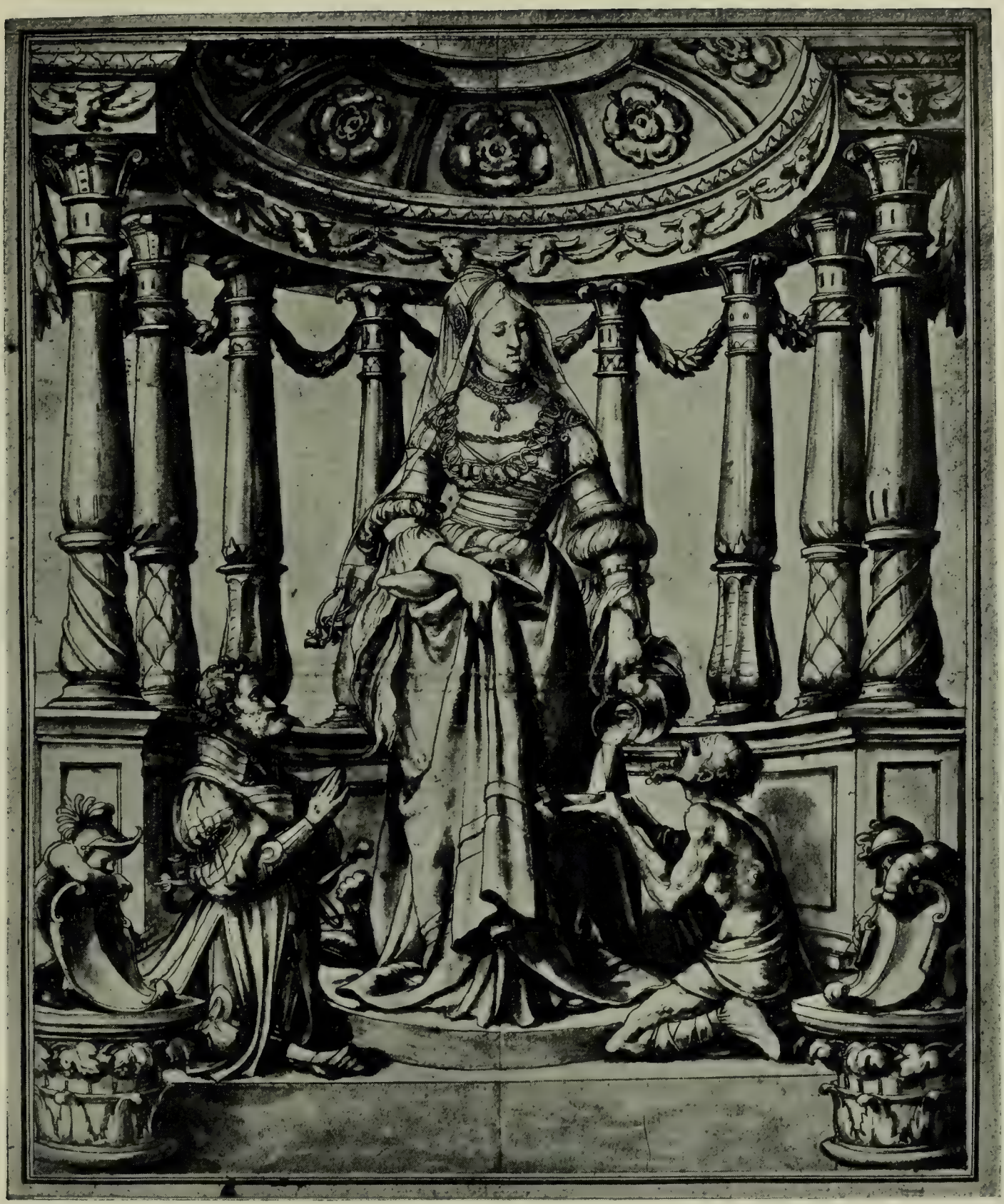
[4] Woltmann, 90. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 35 ; His, Pl. vii.



ST. ELIZABETH, WITH KNEELING KNIGHT AND BEGGAR

Design for painted glass

Basel Gallery



support the dome-shaped roof with its large rosettes in compartments and a frieze of ox-heads and ribbons. St. Elizabeth, who is dressed in the rich costume of a noblewoman or wealthy burgher's wife, with her hair covered by a long veil which falls down her back, holds up the front of her gown with her right hand in the customary Basel manner, and with the other pours wine or water into a bowl held by a kneeling and almost naked beggar, who gazes up into her face. On the other side of her kneels a bearded knight in full armour, with hands raised in prayer, his feathered helmet and his mailed gloves on the ground before him. He is evidently the donor of the window for which the drawing is the original design. His breastplate, with its high gorget, and his other accoutrements, resemble those worn by St. Ursus in the Solothurn picture, and the kneeling beggar recalls the penitent in the same work. The saint, a very graceful and beautifully drawn figure, is placed on a low circular platform of wood or stone, giving the suggestion of a work of sculpture. The whole is strongly reminiscent of the more elaborate monumental tombs of the Italian Renaissance erected in the interior of some church. At the bottom of the drawing, on either side, rise the capitals of two columns, as though the niche in which the figures are placed were raised at some considerable height from the ground. These capitals bear small boys in Roman helmets holding empty shields. The graceful and refined architecture of this drawing suggests, according to Dr. Ganz, that it was designed after Holbein's journey to Montpellier in 1523, during which he became acquainted with the fine buildings of the French Renaissance in Besançon, Dijon, Lyon, and elsewhere.

The same influence is to be seen in a second glass design at Basel, representing the Virgin with the Child in her arms and a kneeling donor on the left (Pl. 45),[1] in which the architectural setting is even more beautiful than in the one just described, of which it is a free variant. The Virgin stands, crowned, on a low sculptured pedestal in front of a shallow niche under a circular arch beneath a pointed vaulting, the filling in of which is carved like a scallop-shell, as in the "Meyer Madonna." The pilasters which support it and the frieze of Renaissance ornamentation are flat, and the whole setting is admirable in

[1] Woltmann, 91. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 42, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 15; Knackfuss, fig. 26; His, Pl. vi.

its restraint and quiet beauty, and its well-balanced masses. The Virgin is surrounded with projecting rays from head to foot, a symbol of the Immaculate Conception, and the whole figure, like that in the foregoing design, is of tall, fine proportions, unlike so many of Holbein's figures in his earlier drawings, and gives the impression of a carved wooden statue with rays of metal or gilded wood. The Child in her arms is kicking out his legs, and raises one chubby fist in the air, looking over his mother's arm with a cross expression, as though angry at having been lifted from the ground. The armed, kneeling knight appears to be the same donor as in the other drawing, but is turned more towards the spectator, with hands uplifted as he gazes in adoration. This exceptionally beautiful and masterly design is said to have been reproduced on a considerably larger scale for a window of the church of St. Theodore in Little Basel. A fragment of the glass, containing the Madonna's head, is preserved in the Historical Museum in Basel.

By far the most important of Holbein's designs for glass windows are those forming the series of ten subjects from the " Passion of Christ," in the Basel Gallery, which in dramatic power and fertility of invention surpass all his earlier treatments of this great subject. The range over which the series extends is a shorter one than in the painted altar-piece in eight scenes representing the same subject. The latter begins with the " Mount of Olives " and ends with the " Entombment," whereas the glass designs start with " Christ before Caiaphas " and conclude with the " Crucifixion," so that the part of the story which is represented is told with greater detail. In most cases the designs are arranged in pairs, with the architectural framework in close though not exact correspondence, and similarly shaped and decorated spaces left at the bottom for the inclusion of the appropriate scriptural text. Evidently in each of the windows of the church for which they were designed pairs of subjects were to be placed side by side. Two of the scenes, however, seem to be single designs, the " Mocking " (No. 3), and the " Ecce Homo " (No. 6), in which the setting corresponds with none of the other drawings; while in the two last of the series, the " Nailing to the Cross " and the " Crucifixion," the architectural framework only agrees in its general lines, though the designs evidently form a pair. Apparently, therefore, the series was made for a range of six windows, four of

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, WITH A KNEELING DONOR

Design for painted glass

Basel Gallery



them with double and two with single divisions. According to Dr. Ganz, the series was begun, but not completed, by Holbein in 1523, his journey to the south of France intervening. On his return to Basel he resumed the work, which was probably finished by the end of the same year or early in 1524. He sees differences, more particularly in the architecture, in certain of the drawings, such as the "Mocking," which suggest that the artist had gained fresh ideas from his study of the buildings in the towns through which he passed on his way to Montpellier, where he went to deliver the portrait of Erasmus to Bonifacius Amerbach.

The series opens with "Christ before Caiaphas" (Pl. 46 (1)).[1] The high priest is seen from the side, seated upon a throne raised on steps within a richly decorated hall, through the entrance to which the soldiers escorting Christ are crowding. Christ stands below his judge, his hands bound, and his sorrowful face turned towards one of the soldiers, who, with uplifted fist, is about to strike him. The second scene, that of the "Scourging" (Pl. 46 (2)),[2] is enacted in another part of the same building, showing the same low, flattened arches, and a corresponding pillar on the right with Renaissance carving in flat relief and inlaid marble. Christ, his head drooping on his shoulder, an almost nude figure, is bound to a broad circular column with a decorated top. In the action of the three soldiers who are plying their whips and scourges there is little of that exaggerated vehemence of action which is to be seen in Holbein's earlier versions of this subject, while in both this and the succeeding pictures the type of face is less repulsive, and greater reticence is shown in the display of brutality. In most cases the faces of the soldiers are turned away from the spectator, or half hidden by their action, or only seen in profile. The distortion and caricature have disappeared, and his types have become natural ones, taken from the daily life around him. The costume in few instances only is that of Holbein's time, and the soldiers wear what is intended to be the antique Roman dress, such as had become familiar to him through Mantegna's designs. Near Christ, in "The Scourging," a little behind the central group, stands a bearded man in the gown and hood of a monk, resting on a stick,

[1] Woltmann, 66. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 28; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 1).

[2] Woltmann, 67. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 22; Davies, p. 72; Knackfuss fig. 29; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 2).

as though superintending the punishment, and waiting for a confession ; and in the background a gallery runs across the building under the arches, from which a second hooded figure is looking down on the scene.

Unlike the other sheets of the set, the "Mocking of Christ" (Pl. 47 (1)) [1] takes place beneath the high, pointed vaulting of some Gothic building, with its arches open to the sky. Christ, blindfolded and with tied hands, his body covered by the robe they have placed over him, is seated in the centre, with bent head, and mouth half open with pain. One of the soldiers kneels, and thrusts the reed into his hand as a sceptre, while a second, stooping down, clutches his hair with one hand, and raises the other as though about to strike him in the face. On the left between two pillars stands a tall figure clad in a long gown, and the upper part of his face concealed by a hood of a peculiar pattern, with a hanging peak behind, such as is associated with portraits of Dante. This spectator, who is also to be seen among the crowd in the first design, has a cynical smile on his face. The whole group, which suggests a study for a work of plastic art, is shown in strong foreshortening, as though it were intended to be seen from some distance below ; and the same effect is produced by the perspective of the vaulting and in the drawing of the hanging lamp, of an unusual and interesting pattern, over Christ's head.[2] This drawing is, perhaps, the most beautiful of all, the happiest in its composition, and the most spiritual in its feeling.

The remaining sheets of the series have each an independent architectural framework, which forms no part of the actual setting of the scene itself, but through which it is seen like a picture. In the "Crowning with Thorns" and "Pilate washing his Hands" it consists of two pillars with large diamond-shaped panels containing antique heads in medallions, and, above the elaborately-carved capitals, charmingly-drawn winged putti supporting the ends of a wreath which hangs from the centre of the frame. In the "Crowning" (Pl. 47 (2)),[3] Christ is seen from the side, an almost nude figure, seated on a high stone step in front of a building upon which Holbein has given free play

[1] Woltmann, 68. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 39 ; Knackfuss, fig. 30 ; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 3).

[2] See Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 39.

[3] Woltmann, 69. Reproduced by His, Pl. x.; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 4).

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

Acts I. 9-11.

CHRIST BEFORE CAIAPHAS

THE SCOURGING OF CHRIST

The "Passion" series of designs for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





THE MOUNTAIN OF CHRIST

Panel Cutter

The Mountain of Christ, design for panel cut by hand

THE MOCKING OF CHRIST

CHRIST CROWNED WITH THORNS

The "Passion" series of designs for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





to his delight in the richest Renaissance forms. In the Saviour's downcast face is a look of intense suffering, nobly borne. Two of the soldiers press the crown of thorns upon his head by means of a long curved stick held across it, which a third man is striking violently with a stout staff, in order to force it securely down. A fourth kneels in front and thrusts the reed into the victim's hands with a jeer. Behind them, on the left, Pilate stands, his wand of office held aloft. In the next scene (Pl. 48 (1))[1] Pilate is seated on a high throne with a canopy supported by chains fastened to the necks of two sculptured figures, and long curtains, both canopy and curtains being decorated with the lilies of France. This throne, or judgment-seat, is placed in an open court, and in the background rises a Gothic building of the type to be seen in the streets of Basel in Holbein's day. Pilate performs the symbolic action of washing his hands with the greatest vigour and determination, one attendant holding a large flat basin in front of him while a second pours in the water. On the right Christ is being led away by a crowd of soldiers with uplifted pikes and spears. Pilate, with head turned towards the departing Saviour, is calling after him, strong excitement shown on his face.

The next scene, the "Ecce Homo" (Pl. 48 (2)),[2] also takes place outside the hall of judgment, with a large Gothic building with pinnacled gables filling in the background. This building is neither German nor Italian in style, but of late Gothic French architecture, of the type of the hospital founded by the Chancellor Nicolas Rollin in Beaune, a town through which Holbein would be likely to pass on his way to Montpellier, and for this reason Dr. Ganz regards it as one of the latest of the series, done after the artist's return to Basel in 1524. Holbein has made use of the same building in the cut of the Empress in the "Dance of Death."[3] Pilate stands in the open doorway on the right, with Christ by his side. One hand grasps his wand of office, and the other is held up as though demanding silence from the crowd of spectators and soldiery filling the space below him, who are shouting and gesticulating, and pointing their fingers in scorn at the drooping figure by Pilate's side. Here again the expression of

[1] Woltmann, 70. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 31; His, Pl. xi.; Woltmann, i. p. 173; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 5).

[2] Woltmann, 71. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 17; His, Pl. xii., Mantz, p. 44 (No. 6).

[3] See Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, p. 36.

suppressed anguish and pain on Christ's face has been admirably suggested by the artist, who has also produced the effect of a large and vehemently-agitated crowd of people by means of a few figures cleverly grouped and contrasted. Behind the Saviour is seen the head of the man in the hood-like cap, possibly intended for some official of the Court, who is shown in two of the earlier designs of the set. He appears again in the "Cross-bearing" (Pl. 49 (1)),[1] the last figure issuing from the gate, and here, too, Holbein, with admirable skill in composition, has produced the effect of a large body of excited people. The procession on its way to Calvary has just issued through the gateway of the town, a view of the street with its high-roofed houses being seen in the background through the archway, and on the right the outer wall with a circular tower at the angle. The general composition follows with some closeness Holbein's earlier versions of the subject, though marked by less passionate action and less insistence on ugly facial types. Christ, a most nobly-conceived figure, in the centre of the procession, is stumbling under the weight of the great cross, though he has not actually fallen to the ground. He is urged forward by the soldiers who surround Him, some of whom raise their clenched fists, while one, clad in Roman helmet and armour, thrusts a great cudgel into his side with a brutal energy which is mirrored in his face. In front walk the two thieves, almost nude, their hands tied behind them, the one who is turning towards the spectator with a finely-drawn head full of character. Above the crowd rise the shafts and points of weapons of many shapes, together with the uplifted ladder and the reed. The framework surrounding this drawing and its fellow is exceptionally rich in its decorative treatment. The columns with their basket-work and flat stucco-like ornament are connected across the top of the sheet by an acanthus-leaf scroll design of great beauty, recalling similar work on the organ shutters in Basel Minster, which surrounds and supports a wreath containing an antique head in the centre. The scroll-work in the next design, the "Stripping of Christ's Garments" (Pl. 49 (2)),[2] is entwined round the bodies of two naked boys. The Saviour kneels upon the Cross, in the utmost misery and dejection, while two soldiers tear

[1] Woltmann, 72. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 50; Knackfuss, fig. 32; His, Pl. xiii.; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 7).

[2] Woltmann, 73. Reproduced by Mantz, p. 44 (No. 8).

HENRI GAILLARD.

Après la prise de Gênes, scène du Quadrige de Lorenzo Ruso

DU CAP DE MISÈNE

AU PALAIS DE L'ÉLYSÉE

PILATE WASHING HIS HANDS

ECCE HOMO

The "Passion" series of designs for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS

THE STRIPPING OF CHRIST'S GARMENTS

The "Passion" series of designs for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





his garments from him with great violence. In striking contrast to these two men is the figure of the kneeling man in the front who is boring holes in the wood to take the nails. He bends over his work, indifferent or oblivious to the turmoil around him, or to the tragedy in which he is playing his humble part. Behind the central group there is a great concourse of people, among whom can be distinguished one of the thieves, and a man with uplifted mattock preparing a hole for the Cross, and, on the right, the head and shoulders of Pilate. In this scene most of the figures are clad in contemporary dress.

An even greater crowd is shown in the last scene but one, the "Nailing to the Cross" (Pl. 50 (1)).[1] Christ lies stretched upon the ground, his body upon the Cross. One of the kneeling executioners forces down his right arm with both hands, while a second, with uplifted hammer, is driving in a huge nail through his palm. On the other side a third man has seized the left arm and is dragging it with violence towards him in order to stretch the body to the utmost. Behind them the soldiers are casting lots for the garments, and still farther away the crosses with the two thieves are being raised aloft. On the right Pilate, on a mule, gazes down at the agonised body of the Saviour, as does a man placed nearer to the spectator, wearing a scholar's cap and gown, who bears some small likeness to Erasmus. In the front, on the ground, is placed a circular wooden box with handles, containing the executioner's tools. The columns of the framework are supported by fauns. In the last scene of all, representing the "Crucifixion" (Pl. 50 (2)),[2] the two crosses with the bodies of the thieves are placed at right angles to the central one, on which Christ is nailed, as in the same subject in the painted altar-panel. This drawing is the only one in the set in which the Virgin and St. John are introduced. St. John, gazing upwards at the Saviour, whose sufferings are at length over, supports the Virgin's drooping body as she leans forward with clasped hands against the foot of the Cross. On the opposite side, on the right, the Centurion, in full Roman armour, and with a large shield decorated with a Medusa head, lifts up his right arm as a sign of his belief. Behind him is a soldier with his crossbow under his arm, and his hands clasped as though he, too, were moved to the

[1] Woltmann, 74. Reproduced by Davies, p. 68; His, Pl. xiv.; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 9).

[2] Woltmann, 75. Reproduced by Davies, p. 70; Knackfuss, fig. 33; Woltmann, i. p. 174; Mantz, p. 44 (No. 10).

utmost by the tragedy. A man who has just affixed the placard over Christ's head is descending a ladder raised at the back of the Cross, and on either side, above the heads of the crowd, are seen the uplifted reed with the sponge dipped in vinegar, and the spear which pierced the Saviour's side. In this scene there is little of the energy and even violence of the earlier pictures ; for the action has come to an end with the death of Christ, and Holbein has depicted it as though a hush had fallen over the multitude of people who, with uplifted faces, are gazing on their handiwork. Their attitudes are quiet and restrained, the vehemence of passion has subsided, and the presence of death has quelled all anger and clamour. Each picture of the series is characterised by great dramatic power, and a force and dignity of conception which shows a striking advance in Holbein's art when compared with the early " Passion " scenes on canvas. In the simplicity and grandeur of their composition, and in the largeness of their design, they afford evidence that had Holbein worked on the southern side of the Alps, he would have equalled, if he had not surpassed, in work of this kind, the frescoes and wall-paintings of the great Italian masters.

Replicas of seven of these ten designs, but reversed, are in the British Museum.[1] They are not the direct work of Holbein's hand, but offsets taken from the Basel drawings by means of damped paper, a common practice with the artist in making decorative designs for such things as cups or goblets, in which the ornamentation on both sides of the object was similar. In the same manner Holbein obtained copies of the " Passion " drawings, and they were afterwards strengthened in places by retouches with a fine brush and Indian ink, undoubtedly the work of Holbein himself. They have thus very largely the character of the original drawings, and are equal to them in effect, though lighter in appearance on account of the method employed, the Indian ink shading being paler in colour than in the originals. In the " Cross-bearing " additional retouches in sepia by a later and weaker hand, which greatly mar the design, are to be seen. The three missing subjects are the " Scourging," " Christ Crowned with Thorns," and the " Nailing to the Cross." This set was formerly in the Lawrence Collection, from which it was purchased for the Museum. It may possibly be the series possessed

[1] Woltmann, 177–183 ; British Museum, 1–7, Binyon Catg., ii. pp. 327–8. See Appendix (D).

CHRIST NAILED TO THE CROSS

THE CRUCIFIXION

The "Passion" series of designs for painted glass

BASEL GALLERY





by Sandrart, which he calls a " Passion in folio," of which two compositions of the set were missing. Sandrart offered 200 florins to anyone who would procure them for him, so that he could exhibit the work complete for the honour of the great master who designed it.

Among the drawings and designs of this period which were not made for the purpose of reproduction in painted glass, the set representing the costumes worn by contemporary Basel ladies is among the most important. There are six of these,[1] or rather five, for the sixth, which represents a *fille de joie* with large hat and low-cut dress (Pl. 51 (1)), is not regarded as a work from Holbein's own hand. They are pen and wash drawings, and, with the exception of the last one, were in Amerbach's possession. It is not easy to say exactly for what purpose they were made, but certainly not for painted glass. It has been suggested that they represent designs for dresses invented by Holbein—sixteenth-century fashion plates—which the ladies of Basel afterwards used as models ; but a simpler and more natural explanation is that they are merely studies of costume made from time to time when Holbein saw a dress which pleased him, which would be of use in the carrying out of his wall-paintings, or his book illustrations, or in other ways. They appear to have been done during his first years in Basel. Perhaps the earliest of them is the one of the noble lady with a hat covered with ostrich feathers,[2] and her hair confined in a silken net at the back, who wears a dress of watered silk with a train, which she holds up with her right hand. This, according to Dr. Ganz, is of about the date 1516 or 1517, and in draughtsmanship and handling has much in common with the portrait of Meyer's wife, Dorothea, while the embroidery and tassel-work of the bodice in both the drawing and the picture are very similar. The drawing of the Basel " Edeldame " (Pl. 52),[3] taken almost from the back, which is the most beautiful of the series, is certainly a little later in date, and shows great freedom, delicacy, and truth of draughtsmanship. Her hair is covered with a semi-transparent striped gauze cap, of a similar pattern to the one in the

[1] Woltmann 76–81. All six reproduced by Mantz, eng. by Edouard Lièvre, p. 128.

[2] Woltmann, 76. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 11, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 3 ; Knackfuss, fig. 42.

[3] Woltmann, 80. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 37; Davies, p, 136; Knackfuss, fig. 44.

portrait of the burgomaster's wife. The neck and shoulders are covered with fine white lawn, and the plain dress is only relieved by deep bands of velvet, and a girdle from which is suspended a metal case of chased work for a measure or " house-wife " at the end of a long band. At least two ladies appear to have served Holbein as a model for these studies. The " Frau Burgermeister," Dorothea Kannengiesser, posed as the Baseler " Burgersfrau," [1] and perhaps as the " Edeldame," while for the remaining studies, among them that of the patrician dame with the feather hat already described, a model of a more lovely and a more wanton appearance served him, who later on was painted by him as " Laïs Corinthiaca." In a second drawing of the set the same lady appears in a gown with puffed sleeves and deep velvet bands, embroidered petticoat and headdress, and wearing a number of ornaments round her neck, including an open-work collar with the word " AMOR." [2] The same model appears in a third drawing (Pl. 51 (2)), in which she poses as a waitress, or hostess, with a tall cylindrical beer-glass supported on her right hand, while with the other she holds up her finely-pleated apron.[3] She wears a large flat hat of unusual shape on the side of her head, trimmed all round with bunches of feathers, and round her neck is a gold collar of open-work with the initials " M.O." repeated several times. The " Amor " of the first-named collar or neckband was the invention, in all probability, of the artist himself, by adding an A and an R to the initials, M.O., of the lady's name. These initials indicate that Holbein's sitter was Magdalena Offenburg, and the likeness between these studies and the " Laïs " and " Venus " pictures is striking.[4] This notorious personage, by birth a Tschekkenbürlin, and the mother of Dorothea Offenburg, who at one time was regarded as the model of the " Laïs," married, on the death of Hans Offenburg in 1514, Christof Truchsess von Wolhusen. She appears to have served as a model and to have had relationships of a doubtful character with more than one painter of Basel. There is a drawing of her by Urs Graf, dated 1516, to which he has added an indecorous marginal note reflecting upon her course of life.[5]

One use to which Holbein put such drawings as these is to be

[1] Woltmann, 78. Also wearing a gauze cap.
[2] Woltmann, 77. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 43.
[3] Woltmann, 79.
[4] See pp. 245–6.
[5] Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, note to iii. 11.

Vol. I, 1977

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF ORIENTAL SILVERWORK

Papers read at a Symposium held in London, 10 September 1976

Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art

COSTUME STUDY

COSTUME STUDY

Two drawings from a set of designs of Ladies' Costumes

Basel Gallery





"THE EDELDAME"

One of a set of designs of Ladies' Costumes

Basel Gallery



seen in the "Dance of Death" woodcuts. In several of them in which women are introduced, these costume studies are closely followed; for instance, in the little picture of the newly-married couple, the wife's dress is almost identical with that in the first drawing of the "Baseler Frauentrachten" series; and other dresses of the set are closely copied in such cuts as "The Countess" and the "Arms of Death." These drawings, as already noted, show very plainly the peculiar carriage of the body in walking which the ladies of Basel adopted in Holbein's day, with the back hollowed so that the lower part of the figure was thrust forward, in a very ugly fashion to modern eyes, but no doubt necessary to some extent owing to the length of the dress in front, which had always to be held up by one hand.

There is a very beautiful costume study in the Library at Dessau,[1] which is closely allied to the Basel series. It is an exceedingly graceful rendering of a fair lady in an elaborate dress with long hanging sleeves, and a close-fitting cap over her curled hair. The body is slightly inclined, and with her right hand she holds up her dress, and from the other, which is stretched out, hangs a bridle and harness. There is much elegance and grace of movement in the figure, which Holbein has set down with a light and flowing touch. It is doubtful what character the model is intended to represent. Dr. Ganz calls her "Die schöne Phyllis," and, from the bridle she is holding, it is very possible that Holbein intended her for that fair Phyllis who made the learned Aristotle serve her as a horse; or she may represent Nemesis, the driver of mankind, whom Holbein introduced into his Steelyard wall-painting of "The Triumph of Riches," flying through the sky with somewhat similar attributes in her hands. Such a representation of Nemesis or Fortune was not unusual, and occurs in more than one drawing of the period. There is one in the Basel Gallery of "Frau Venus" by Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, and Dürer also makes use of the bridle in his "Great Fortune."

The beautiful study of "St. Adrian" in the Louvre,[2] a pen and wash drawing, touched with white, on grey paper, is probably the preliminary design for the outer side of the shutter of an altar-piece, to be carried out in grisaille. The saint is represented in full armour,

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 26; and see his note, p. 44.

[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 55, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 12.

with a long cloak, holding the sword and anvil, symbols of his martyrdom, in either hand, and a lion crouching at his feet. He stands on a stone parapet, in front of which is an empty shield. The figure has much in common with that of St. Ursus in the Solothurn Madonna picture, and there is a still closer resemblance in face to the "St. George" in the Karlsruhe panel, both of the year 1522. Holbein evidently made use of the same model both for the "St. Adrian" and the "St. George," for the facial likeness is very close, and both wear the same bushy, curling hair. It is, therefore, safe, following Dr. Ganz, to date the Louvre drawing as of the same year, 1522. It was formerly catalogued as of the North Italian School.

Holbein's studies from the nude are so rare that the one of a young woman in the Basel Gallery is of exceptional interest.[1] It is a pen and wash drawing, touched with white in the high lights, on red paper. With the exception of the "Christ in the Tomb," and a single leaf of the Basel "Sketch-Book,"[2] this nude woman is almost the only drawing of the kind by him that is known. It appears to have been made merely as a study of muscular movement, and not as a preliminary design for a picture. The model is stepping forward from the side of a plain stone pillar, a heavy stone held in either hand, the weight of which brings the muscles of the arms into prominence. Her hair falls in long curls down her back, the head is bent towards the right shoulder, and the eyes are cast downwards, and the lips parted. Both in movement and in the suggestion of the rounded softness of the figure the drawing is admirable, and at the same time displays an Italian influence, recalling similar studies by Raphael and Leonardo. Dr. Ganz places it among the work of Holbein's second English period.

Holbein made use of the Swiss landsknechte for other purposes than that of painted windows. One or two of his most masterly drawings depict incidents in the lives of these men, whose picturesque dress and gay and manly bearing made a strong appeal to him. The finest and most important of them is the large study in the Basel Gallery representing a fierce conflict between two considerable bodies of warriors (Pl. 53).[3] It depicts the contemporary methods of warfare with

[1] Woltmann, 104. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 36, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 28; Knackfuss, fig. 68.

[2] And the Lachner glass design. See Appendix (B).

[3] Woltmann, 63. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 10; Knackfuss, fig. 69.

A FIGHT BETWEEN LANDSKNECHTE

Drawing in Indian ink

BASEL GALLERY



the utmost vivacity and close adherence to truth. It is, according to Dr. Ganz, a work of Holbein's last residence in Basel, probably made just before his return to England in 1532. In the foreground of the fight two men are at close quarters, one of whom, with sword whirling over his head, grips the hair of his opponent, who is striking at his throat with a long dagger. On either side of them two soldiers are forcing a space round them with enormous pikes, while behind is a great crowd of shouting, panting, and struggling men, whose lances, dashed in with a few hasty strokes, stand out against the sky with an extraordinary effect both of number and movement. In the hottest part of the fight one combatant uplifts a great double-handed sword, while another protects his face with his raised drum. Beneath their feet are many trampled bodies and shattered weapons. The composition is a very fine one, and the draughtsmanship of extraordinary vigour and vitality. One can almost hear the cries and yells, and the clash of the arms, so completely has Holbein realised the scene, and so vividly set it down on paper with rapid but unerring pencil.[1]

It is impossible to give here even a list of his many drawings, of which so large a number are in the Basel Gallery. In the Amerbach Collection there is a sheet with studies of a recumbent lamb and a lamb's head,[2] both drawn with the utmost delicacy in silver-point and slightly washed with water-colour, most faithful renderings of nature, perhaps made as a preliminary study for some picture of the youthful St. John; and a second sheet with a drawing of the underside of a bat with outstretched wings,[3] carried out with the same minute care, the red veins, which show through the transparent membranes of the wings, being put in with water-colour. In the same collection there are numerous designs for jewellery, dagger-sheaths, cups and other vessels, for the use of silversmiths and metal-workers; but as much of Holbein's best work of this kind was produced in England, discussion of them may be reserved until a later chapter dealing with his designs for the London goldsmiths.

[1] This drawing is only the central part of the design, the left-hand half being in the Albertina, Vienna (Woltmann, 259). For the drawing at Frankfurt of the transport ship with landsknechte, see Vol. ii. p. 264.

[2] Woltmann, 105. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 17.

[3] Woltmann, 106. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 18.

CHAPTER VIII

PORTRAITS OF ERASMUS AND HIS CIRCLE

Portraits of Erasmus and Ægidius by Quentin Metsys—Copy of the "Erasmus" at Hampton Court and the original in Rome—Portraits of Erasmus by Holbein sent to London—The Longford Castle "Erasmus" and copies of it—The Louvre portrait, and the study for it at Basel—Holbein's journey to the South of France—Drawings of the sepulchral effigies of the Duke and Duchess of Berry—The Greystoke portrait and the version at Parma—The Basel roundel—Woodcut portraits of Erasmus—Portraits of Froben—Melanchthon—Holbein's drawing of himself at Basel.



HE portraits painted by Holbein prior to his departure from Basel to England were not numerous, even when allowance is made for the probable disappearance or destruction of several of which no trace now remains. There are less than a dozen in all, even when the three different versions of Erasmus are included. The Burgomaster Meyer and his wife, Benedikt von Hertenstein, Amerbach, Froben, Erasmus, and his own portrait almost complete the list, to which may be added the two versions of Magdalena Offenburg as "Venus" and as "Lais," and the portrait at the Hague now said to represent his wife shortly after he married her. Considering the mastery he had already displayed in this branch of art, it is extraordinary that he did not receive more commissions for portraits from his fellow-citizens. He found a good patron in Erasmus, however, who was always ready to sit for his likeness. He was painted by several well-known artists, and employed Holbein on more than one occasion. He presented several of these portraits to friends and supporters in England and elsewhere, and as he had many admirers who were anxious to possess one, Holbein's original pictures of him were copied a number of times both during the philosopher's lifetime and afterwards.

Although Erasmus paid his first visit to Basel in 1513 for the purpose of making the acquaintance of Froben, who was about to publish several of his works, including his edition of the New Testament, and renewed this visit on several occasions, sometimes

remaining there for months at a time, he did not make the city his permanent home until 1521. Both during these earlier visits and after he had settled in Basel, he made Froben's home his own. This house, "zum Sessel," was in the Fischmarkt, but after Froben's death in 1526, Erasmus moved to the house of Froben's son, "zum Luft," now No. 18 in the Bäumleingasse, and it was in this latter house that he died in 1536. He was attracted by the freedom and independence of the life within the city, and the opportunities it afforded both for quiet study and daily intercourse with many learned men, and also by the number and fame of its printers and their presses.

The earliest portrait of Erasmus of which we have a record is the one painted by Quentin Metsys in Antwerp in 1517, which formed the left-hand side of a double portrait or diptych, of which the other half contained the portrait of Peter Ægidius, the learned traveller, and town-clerk of Antwerp,[1] to whom the *Utopia* was dedicated, and whose garden was selected by More as the scene in which Raphael Hythlodæus told the imaginary story of that island city. It was painted as a joint-gift from Erasmus and Ægidius to Sir Thomas, and the two portraits were hinged together, and sent over to England. Several letters in the correspondence of More and Erasmus have reference to this present. The painting was delayed in the first place by the serious illness of Peter, and then by indisposition on the part of Erasmus. "I was well enough," Erasmus tells More, "but some fool of a doctor prescribed for me a couple of pills for purging my bile, and I, still more foolishly, followed his advice; my picture had been previously begun, but, from the physic I took, when I came back to the painter, he declared that my features were not the same, so that his work is delayed for a few days until I become more alive." The portraits were finished by the 16th of September 1517, and sent to More, who was then at Calais, in charge of Erasmus' "famulus," Peter Cocles. More's letter of thanks, dated October 6th, expressed the greatest delight with the gift, and contained a Latin poem in honour of the portraits, in which they were both minutely described. In a postscript he spoke in admiration of the way in which Quentin had imitated his (More's) handwriting on the letter which Peter holds in his hand.

[1] Ægidius was thirty-one when the portrait was painted, and had been appointed town-clerk seven years previously.

These two portraits no longer hang together, and until quite recently all traces of the "Erasmus" had been lost. The "Ægidius" is now in Longford Castle, in the possession of Lord Radnor, and with it hangs a portrait of Erasmus; but the latter is not by Metsys, but by Holbein. At what period the original pair were parted is not known, but the two in Longford Castle were purchased at Dr. Meade's sale in 1754, the first Lord Folkestone giving 105 guineas for the "Erasmus," which was rightly sold as by Holbein, and 91 guineas for the "Ægidius," also described as by the same painter; and for many years both portraits were regarded as the work of Holbein. Dr. Meade placed Latin inscriptions on the frames, in which the names of Erasmus, Ægidius, and Holbein were joined together. In more recent years the authorship of the "Ægidius" has been rightly ascribed to Metsys, while Holbein's signature, and the date 1523 on the "Erasmus" prove conclusively that it is not the original companion-half of the diptych painted in Antwerp in 1517, further proof of this being afforded by the fact that both subjects are represented looking to the spectator's left, instead of towards one another, and that the "Erasmus" is painted on a considerably larger scale than the other, which would not have been the case had the portraits been intended as a pair. The matter was finally cleared up by the late Mr. John Gough Nichols.[1] Ægidius[2] is represented in a fur coat, holding in his left hand a letter addressed to himself in the handwriting of Sir Thomas More,[3] and his right touching a book which is inscribed "Antibarbaroi" in Greek capitals. An ivory sand-castor and a gold cup and cover are on one of the shelves at the back, which are covered with books. There is a replica of it in the Antwerp Museum, which differs slightly in a few of the details, and is either a fine contemporary copy or from the hand of Metsys himself, though until quite recently it was still officially described as a portrait of Erasmus by Holbein.[4]

Until a year or two ago all traces of the original "Erasmus" by

[1] *Archæologia*, xliv. pp. 435 *et seq.*

[2] Reproduced by Sir Claude Phillips, *Art Journal*, 1897, p. 101; Arundel Club, 1905; Catalogue of the Pictures in the Earl of Radnor's Collection, 1909, vol. i. No. 80; A. Machiels, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, Nov. 1911, heliotype.

[3] Inscribed "Viro Literatissimo Petro Egidio Amico Charissimo Antuerpiæ."

[4] Eng. by F. Leuwers, 1873. For a description and history of the two pictures, see H. Barclay Squire, in Lord Radnor's Catalogue, note to No. 80, vol. i. pp. 44, 45.

Metsys had disappeared, but Herman Grimm, Woltmann, and H. Hymans all identified a picture at Hampton Court as a reduced copy of the original. This is the "Erasmus Writing" (No. 594—331), a small half-length, turned to the right, but with both eyes seen. He is writing in a book which lies on a desk in front of him. Other books are on a shelf at the back, with the titles inscribed on the edges of the leaves, all of them works by Erasmus published before 1517. Mr. Ernest Law[1] suggests that it is identical with the picture in Charles I's catalogue described as "Some schollar without a beard, in a black habit and a black cap, looking downwards upon a letter which he holds in both hands, being side-faced, less than life; which was sent to the King by his Majesty's sister, by Mr. Chancellor, Sir Henry Vane, Lord Ambassador from the King to the King of Sweden, painted upon the right light—done by Cornelius Vischer." The poorness of the execution, the indistinctness of the lettering on the books, and the utter gibberish of the words which Erasmus is writing, betray the hand of some ignorant copyist, though enough of the wording can be traced to show that the philosopher is engaged in setting down the title and first words of his commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which was begun in 1517.[2] There is a second copy of this portrait in the Amsterdam Museum; and in the 1904 edition of the Amsterdam Catalogue (p. 200), a third example was first described, which is now generally regarded as the work of Metsys himself and the missing half of the diptych. It is in Rome, until recently in the collection of the late Count Stroganoff, and was in the possession of Count Alexander Stroganoff as early as 1807. It is slightly smaller than the "Ægidius" at Longford Castle, but has evidently been cut down, as the height of the heads as seen against the shelves at the back is the same in both pictures. Metsys represented the two friends as though seated in a single chamber. Erasmus is placed on the left, facing the right, and engaged in writing, and Ægidius is on the other side of the room, looking up with More's letter in his hand, and pushing forward his own book of travels as

[1] Law, *Royal Gallery of Hampton Court*, 1898, p. 215.

[2] A poor reproduction of this portrait—which Wornum (p. 143) regarded as a fine, genuine work by Holbein, but in some of its details recalling Metsys—accompanies M. Henri Hymans' article "Quentin Metsys et son Portrait d'Erasme," in the *Bulletin des Commissions Royales d'Art et d'Archéologie*, 1882; reproduced also by J. R. Haarhaus, "Bildnisse des Erasmus," *Zeits. für bild. Kunst*, Nov. 1898.

though about to present it to the Englishman. The same bookshelves run across the background in both portraits.[1] The picture has been recently presented by Count Stroganoff's heirs to the Corsini Gallery in Rome.

Three or four years later Erasmus' likeness was taken by Albrecht Dürer, who met him during his tour in the Netherlands in July 1520. Dürer appears to have made two drawings[2] of him at this time, and some years afterwards, in 1526, he engraved his head from memory, with the aid of one of these two studies. This engraving[3] by no means equals Holbein's several portraits of the scholar, either as a likeness, or in its subtle expression of character. Erasmus, writing to Pirkheimer, said that it was not at all like him, but that this was not surprising, as he had greatly changed in five years.

There is no direct evidence to prove that Holbein painted any portrait of Erasmus before the year 1523, though it is very possible that he did so. Perhaps the earliest may be the one mentioned by Remigius Faesch, who infers, in his manuscript life of the painter, that Holbein once painted a double picture of the friends Erasmus and Froben.[4] It is said that after the sudden death of the latter in 1527, from injuries caused by a fall on the pavement, Erasmus obtained the two portraits, and had them hinged together, as a perpetual memorial of their great friendship. After the death of Erasmus in 1536 this diptych remained in Basel for nearly a century, and was then bought, about the year 1625, by Michel Le Blond, the well-known collector of works of art, for one hundred golden ducats, and shortly afterwards sold by him to the Duke of Buckingham. The Duke afterwards gave the panels to Charles I. On the back of the "Froben" portrait at Hampton Court there is pasted a piece of paper inscribed—"This picture of Frobonus was delivered to his M^{t}. by ye Duke of Buckingham [before he went to the] Isle of Ree," the five words in brackets being now illegible. In King Charles' Catalogue they are entered as, "The picture of Frobonius, with his printing tools by him, being Erasmus of Rotterdam's printer and landlord at

[1] See André Machiels, "Les Portraits d'Erasme," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, November 1911, pp. 349-61, who reproduces the Rome portrait; also W. Barclay Squire, *Lord Radnor's Catalogue*, addit. note to No. 80.

[2] One of these drawings is in the collection of M. Léon Bonnat, Paris, and is reproduced in the *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, 1879, i. p. 269.

[3] Reproduced by A. Machiels, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, Nov. 1911, p. 355.

[4] See Appendix (E).

Basil. Done by Holbein"; and, "The picture of Erasmus of Rotterdam, in a high black frame; done by Holben, fellow to the aforesaid piece of Frobenius, painted upon the right light." They were sold separately, after the King's execution, by order of the Commonwealth, and fetched larger prices than almost any other pictures from the royal collection. They were valued at £100 each, and at that price were purchased by Mr. Milburne and Colonel Hutchinson respectively. They were returned to the royal collection at the Restoration, and in 1672 Patin saw them hinged together as they had been in earlier days. They are now in Hampton Court.

While in the possession of Charles I, or more probably Le Blond,[1] these two portraits were "restored," and by no means improved. Four inches were added to the top of the "Frobenius" in order to make it a pendant to the "Erasmus," and the backgrounds were repainted and altered by Von Steenwyck. The original background of the "Frobenius" was either plain or a simple room with a window, but has been changed to a lofty apartment with pillars and a paved floor, part of the original blue-green ground being left behind the head; in the "Erasmus" it has been turned into an elaborate arrangement of stone pillars and arches, resembling the gloomy interior of a church. Walpole states that Von Steenwyck's name and the date 1629 are on the "Frobenius," but this inscription cannot now be discovered. The latter is by far the finer work of the two.

The portrait of Froben, which most modern critics do not admit to be an original work, is described below. The companion portrait of Erasmus—No. 597 (324)—is certainly only a copy, and not a very good copy, of some original by Holbein, possibly the Longford "Erasmus," to which it bears a close resemblance. It was accepted by Wornum as a genuine work of the early Basel period,[2] but modern criticism is unanimous in condemning its authenticity. Its only claim, and a very slight one, to genuineness is that it was formerly hinged to the portrait of Froben; but Mr. Ernest Law[3] throws doubt on the story that Erasmus himself had the two joined together, which he regards as a myth, and suggests that the joining was done by some picture-dealer in Basel after Erasmus' death, or by Le Blond himself

[1] According to Walpole, *Anecdotes*, ed. Wornum, 1888, i. p. 344, the pictures were "altered" by Von Steenwyck for King Charles.

[2] Wornum, p. 140.

[3] Law, *Holbein's Pictures at Windsor Castle*, 1901, p. 28.

when he purchased them. In the Hampton Court picture[1] the scholar is represented at half-length, less than life, turned slightly to the left. He is dressed in the usual black coat trimmed with fur, and a black cap. The hands, excellently drawn, rest on a closed red-bound book in front of him. The original plain background, as already stated, has been elaborated and spoilt by Von Steenwyck. It is probable that the double portrait spoken of by Faesch, of which he had a copy, was not the original work of Holbein, and in that case the supposition, based on his manuscript, that at some unknown period in the history of the diptych the "Erasmus" was removed, and a copy substituted for it, is equally incorrect.[2]

Most possibly the picture now at Hampton Court was the one actually purchased by Le Blond in Basel, to whom it would be sold as a genuine work by Holbein. A still less probable supposition is that a change took place after the sale of the royal collection in 1650, when the picture was in the possession of Mr. Milburne, who, it is suggested, at the Restoration returned a copy in place of the original.

The first portraits of Erasmus by Holbein to which a date can be given are the Longford Castle example and the profile likeness in the Louvre, both of which were painted in 1523, probably towards the end of that year, when the artist was about twenty-six; and it is generally agreed that these are the two which were sent to England by Erasmus in 1524. In a letter to his friend Wilibald Pirkheimer at Nuremberg, dated June 3rd of that year, Erasmus says: "Only recently I have again sent two portraits of me to England, painted by a not unskilful artist. He has also taken a portrait of me to France." That the painter to whom Erasmus refers was Holbein is proved by a passage in Beatus Rhenanus' *Emendations of Pliny*, published by Froben in March 1526, and written in the previous year. In speaking of the most celebrated German painters of the day, he mentions Dürer in Nuremberg, Hans Baldung in Strasburg, and Lucas Cranach in Saxony, and concludes with Hans Holbein in Switzerland, "born in Augsburg, but for a long time a burgher of Basel, who last year painted, most successfully and finely, two portraits of our Erasmus of Rotterdam, which he afterwards sent into England."[3]

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 207.
[2] See Appendix (E).
[3] See A. Horawitz, *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, viii. p. 128. Quoted by Woltmann, i. p. 286.

One of the two sent to England was a present to William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose yearly pension to Erasmus was increased about this time. The latter wrote to Warham on September 4, 1524: "I hope that the portrait painted of me, which I sent to you, has reached you, so that you may have somewhat of Erasmus should God call me hence." It is not known for whom the second portrait was intended. No reference to it is to be found in the numerous letters despatched to England by Erasmus in that year, addressed, among others, to Fisher, Tunstall, Wolsey, and the King himself. It was not, apparently, meant for Sir Thomas More, for he already possessed the portrait of his friend by Metsys, and it is not very probable that Erasmus would send him a second. Nor does More speak of it in his letters to Basel, although he is certain to have done so had he received so valuable a gift, for he was lavish in his praise and his thanks for the Metsys portrait in 1517. It has been generally supposed that the well-known letter from More to Erasmus, in which he speaks of Holbein as a wonderful artist, affords proof that Sir Thomas had seen one or both of these two portraits, and that it was of them he was speaking when he praised the painter's skill. The date of this letter is given as December 18, 1525, in the published works of Erasmus, but Herman Grimm showed that it was incorrect, and altered the year-date to 1524, in which Woltmann followed him. This, however, is also an error. The real date of the letter is 1526, as is proved by the literary work of Erasmus mentioned in it; and it has, therefore, nothing to do with the two portraits sent over in 1524, but was written shortly after Holbein's arrival in London, when More had made his personal acquaintance.[1]

It is impossible to say which of the two portraits of 1523 is the earlier in date. No doubt the preliminary drawings for both were made in the little room or study in which the scholar sat daily at work upon his own writings, or supervising the publication and correcting the proofs of other volumes issued by Froben, for whom he was then acting as a kind of editor-in-chief. In the Longford Castle example (Pl. 54)[2] Holbein has shown his sitter to the waist,

[1] F. M. Nichols, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, second series, xvii. No. I., pp. 132–145.

[2] Woltmann, 214. Reproduced by Davies, frontispiece; Sir Claude Phillips, *Art Journal*, 1897, p. 102; Earl of Radnor's Catalogue, No. 81; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 37; Machiels, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, Nov. 1911, p. 357. Exhibited Royal Academy Winter Exhib., 1873, No. 178.

turned to the left, the face seen in three-quarters. He is wearing his invariable dress of black lined with sable, and over it a dark cloak trimmed with black fur, and a black doctor's cap over his grey hair. He gazes in front of him, with a half-smile in his blue eyes and on his fine, sensitive mouth. His hands rest on a red book placed on the table before him, on the gilt edges of which is inscribed, partly in Greek and partly in Latin characters, " HPAKAEIOI PONOI ERASMI ROTERO—" (The Herculean labours of Erasmus of Rotterdam)—the end of the last word being hidden by the sable cuff of the cloak. The background shows on the left a flat, richly-ornamented pillar and capital of Renaissance design, and on the right a green curtain hung from a rod by rings, partly drawn aside, and revealing a shelf on which are three books and a glass water-bottle. On the cover of the book which leans against the latter is the date " MDXXIII.," and on the edge of the same volume is a damaged couplet in Latin, now partly defaced, which J. Mähly, after supplying several missing words, read as follows :—

" Ille ego Joannes Holbein, en, non facile ullus.
Tam mihi mimus erit quam mihi momus erat." [1]

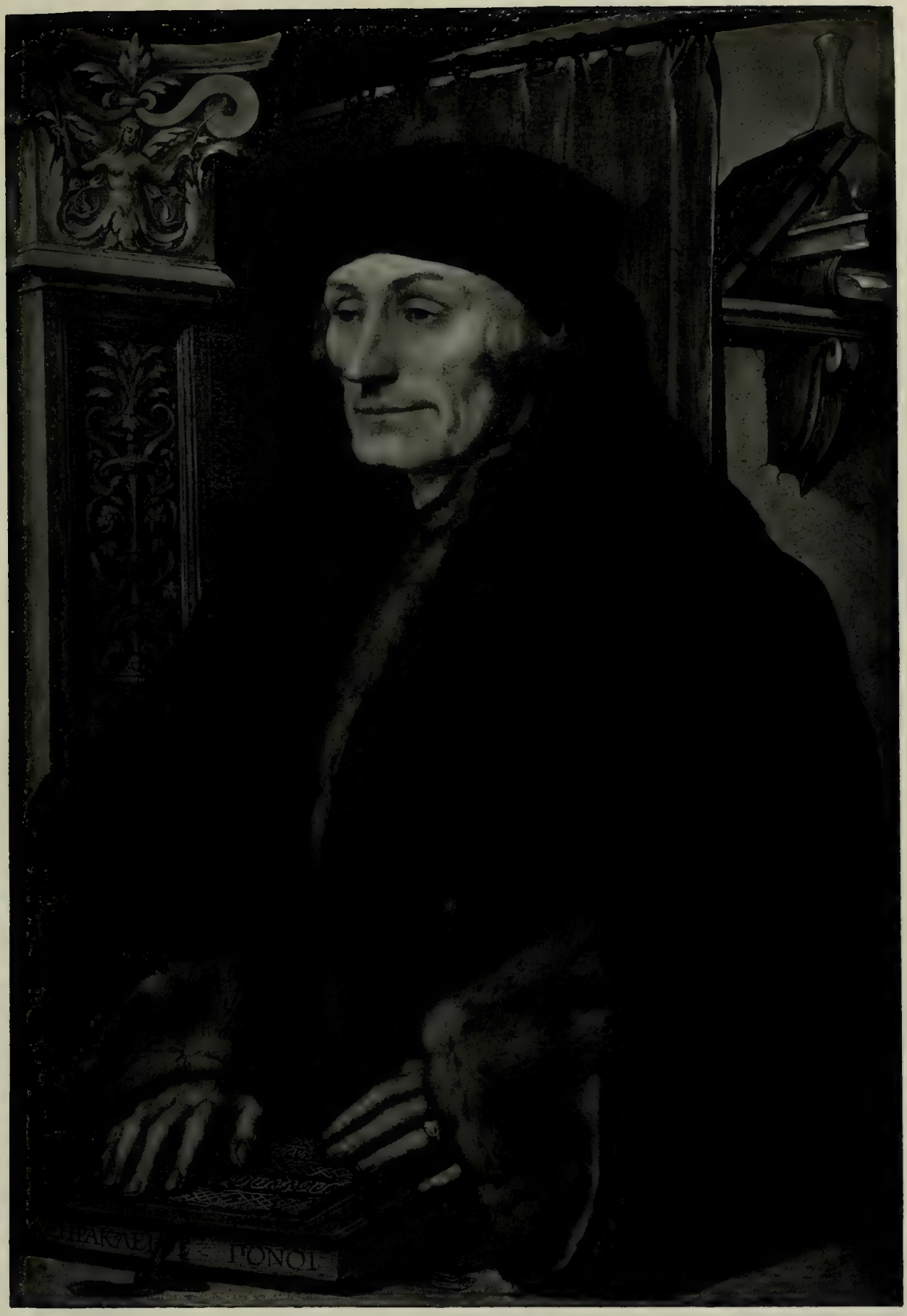
These lines, no doubt, were composed by Erasmus himself in praise of the artist. Traces of further inscriptions, now undecipherable, are to be seen on the edges of the other books. This work shows an extraordinary advance in Holbein's powers as a portrait-painter when compared with even so fine a work as the " Bonifacius Amerbach," painted four years earlier. The modelling of both head and hands is searching in its truth, and he rarely accomplished anything more perfect in the subtlety of its delineation of character, and in a realism without exaggeration or hardness of detail. We see the " little old man," as Dürer described him when he met him in Brussels some years earlier, just as he was in reality, the marks of age on his strongly-lined face, and about the eyes something of the tired look of the scholar and bookman, but the face still stamped with mental energy, and a calm, tolerant, and dignified outlook on life. A faint smile lights up his features, as though satisfied both with his own accomplished work and with the world in which he

[1] In *Jahrbücher des Vereins von Alterthumsfreunden im Rheinlande*, 1868, p. 269, quoted by Woltmann, i. p. 288. For other readings by Grimm, &c., see W. Barclay Squire in Lord Radnor's Catalogue, note to 81.

ERASMUS

1523

From the picture in the collection of the Earl of Radnor at Longford Castle



was living. For penetrating insight, indeed, this portrait is almost unsurpassed. It shows that side of the character of Erasmus which is displayed in his familiar letters to friends, in his *Praise of Folly*, and his *Colloquies*, a gentle, genial sense of humour which sweetened his intercourse with his fellows.[1] A sheet in the Print Room of the Louvre contains a slight, almost obliterated, study for the head in this picture, but full-face, and a masterly drawing for the right hand, full of character;[2] a second contains two studies of the left hand, and one of the right hand holding the pen in the Louvre portrait (Pl. 55).[3] In the catalogue of the Meade sale it was stated that the picture had been at one time in the Arundel Collection.[4]

This version of Erasmus was repeated and copied more than once, with slight modifications, during the lifetime of the sitter as well as after his death. Such versions are to be found at Turin, Vienna, and elsewhere, the best of which is the one in the collection of Mr. Walter Gay, in Paris;[5] while there are others, less closely following the original, such as the "Erasmus" at Hampton Court already described, which forms a pendant to the "Frobenius." There is a fine portrait of Erasmus in Windsor Castle by George Pencz[6] of Nuremberg, a pupil of Dürer's, which is evidently based on the Longford Castle picture, or a good copy of it,[7] which bears the artist's initials and the date 1537, so that it was painted the year after the scholar's death. It has a plain green background, on which the shadow of the head is cast, and part only of the clasped hands are shown. The dress closely resembles that worn by Erasmus in the Longford Castle picture. This portrait, though it lacks much of the character of the original which inspired it, reproduces many of its small details, including the peculiar patch of darkened skin between the left cheek-bone and the ear, which is to be seen in almost all

[1] See Sir Claude Phillips, *Art Journal*, 1897, p. 103. Also Waagen, *Galleries and Cabinets*, 1857, p. 356, who says that it is "alone worth a pilgrimage to Longford Castle."

[2] Woltmann, 232. Reproduced by Davies, p. 110; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxiii.

[3] Woltmann, 231. Reproduced by Davies, p. 110; Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 16.

[4] It is possibly the portrait noted by Evelyn in his *Diary*, August 10, 1655—"I went to Alburie to visit Mr. Howard. . . . He shew'd me many rare pictures, particularly . . . *Erasmus* as big as the life, by Holbein." This could hardly refer to the small Greystoke portrait.

[5] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 206. Mr. Barclay Squire notes copies of Mr. Gay's version in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, presented by Sir James Thornhill in 1728, and one in Archbishop Tenison's School, Leicester Square (note to No. 81, Lord Radnor's Catalogue).

[6] Reproduced by Cust, *Royal Collection of Paintings, Windsor Castle*, Pl. 47.

[7] Or perhaps the small roundel at Basel mentioned below.

Holbein's portraits of him.[1] It was bought by the Duke of Hamilton in Nuremberg and presented by him to Charles I in 1652. It was No. 13 in Van der Doort's Catalogue of that King's collections. Everything indicates that the original picture of which this is a version was in England in 1537; but as there is no record of any visit paid to this country by Pencz, he must have worked, not from the Longford original, but from one of the variants painted about 1530, after Holbein's return to Basel from England.

The portrait in the Louvre (Pl. 56)[2] is smaller than the Longford Castle picture. Erasmus is shown in profile to the left, about two-thirds the size of life, seated at a table, writing, his eyes cast down on the paper, which he holds in position with his left hand upon a book he is using as a writing-desk. In his right[3] is a reed pen. His dress is the same as in Lord Radnor's picture, and his black cap almost conceals his grey hair. In the background on the left is a damask curtain of dark bluish-green, with a pattern of trees and lions in sage green, and powdered with small red and white flowers; and, on the right, some wooden panelling. The inscription on the paper he holds is now quite illegible, but in the study for the picture, in the Basel Gallery, it is still to be plainly read, and shows that the scholar is setting down the title of the work upon which he was engaged at the time he was sitting to Holbein. It runs—

> "In Evangelium Marci paraphrasis per
> D. Erasmum Roterodamium aucto[rem]
> Cunctis mortalibus ins[itum est]."

This is the heading of his paraphrase of the Gospel of St. Mark, upon which he was at work in 1523, and gives the date of the picture. The inscription on the Louvre portrait was undoubtedly the same.

This portrait, like the one in Longford Castle, is painted with the utmost perfection, in dark but warm tones; it almost surpasses the other both in colouring and in its mastery of expression. The features are firmly set, the sitter's thoughts entirely concentrated on his work, so that he is oblivious to all else but the matter in hand. The drawing of the hands is masterly. The complexion is warm

[1] See Colvin, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xvi. Nov. 1909, p. 71.

[2] Woltmann, 224. Reproduced by Davies, p. 108; Knackfuss, fig. 52; Sir C. Phillips, "Picture Gallery of Charles I," *Portfolio Monograph*, 1896, p. 23; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 39.

[3] The study for this hand, in the Louvre, has been already mentioned (see Pl. 55).

STAT FOR THE HAVANA TO BRAZILS

STUDY FOR THE HANDS OF ERASMUS

Drawing in silver-point and red and black chalk

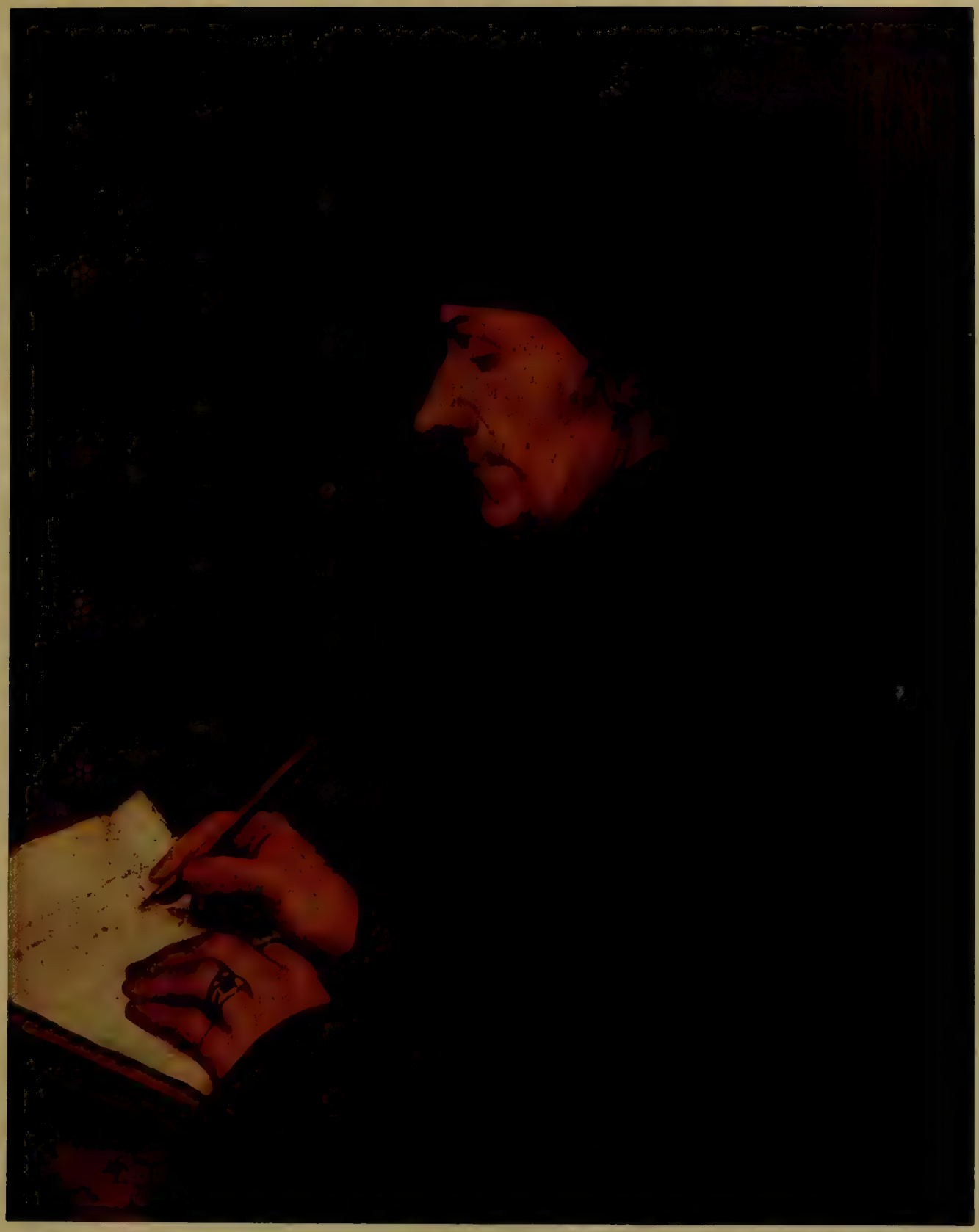
LOUVRE, PARIS



ERASMUS

1523

Louvre, Paris



and healthy, and the eyebrows, unlike the hair, locks of which straggle below the cap, have not yet turned grey. This picture was once in the possession of the Newton family. On the back of the pine panel on which it is painted is pasted a paper memorandum, now partly destroyed, which runs: "Of Holbein, this . . . of Erasmus Rotterdamus was given to . . . Prince by Jos. Adam Newton." In addition there is a red seal with the Newton arms and their motto, "Vivit post funera virtus," as well as the brand of Charles I (C. R. surmounted by a crown), and of the French royal collection (M. R.—*i.e.* Musée Royal—also below a crown). King Charles afterwards exchanged this picture and a "Holy Family" by Titian with Louis XIII for Leonardo's "St. John the Baptist," through the medium of the French Ambassador, the Duc de Liancourt. After Charles's execution the Leonardo returned to the French royal collections, being purchased at the sale by the French banker Jabach for £140, and presented by him to Louis XIV. In the catalogue of the Louvre by MM. Lafenestre and Richtenberger it is stated that the "Erasmus" was "painted for Sir Thomas More," but this is mere conjecture, and probably not correct. It was engraved by François Dequevauvillers for the "Galerie du Musée Napoléon," and etched by Félix Bracquemond about 1860. A facsimile of the first state of this fine plate was reproduced in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* [1] shortly after the etcher's death.

The original study for the Louvre portrait, in the Basel Gallery (No. 319),[2] is painted in oil on paper, afterwards fastened down on panel. With the exception of a plain background, and some slight differences in the costume, it agrees in all points with the more elaborately finished picture. Erasmus is using a book bound in red as a writing-desk, which rests upon a second volume. The tablecloth is green. His upper lip shows several days' growth of iron-grey hair. Although not so fine in execution, it is nevertheless a remarkable and lifelike study. The present plain green background, however, is not original. It had at one time a patterned tapestry hanging behind the figure, as can be seen in the woodcut taken from it by Rudolf Manuel in the Latin edition of Sebastian Münster's *Cosmography*, published in 1550, which has an inscription beneath it referring to the portrait in terms

[1] Vol. xxix., 1884, p. 423.

[2] Woltmann, 12. Reproduced by Woltmann, vol. i. p. 315, fig. 57; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 38.

of high praise, and stating that Holbein painted it from life.[1] It is described in the Amerbach inventory as "Ein Erasmus mit olfärb vf papir in eim ghüs H. Holbeins arbeit," and it appears to have belonged to Bonifacius almost from the day it was painted. All evidence points to this oil-study being the third portrait mentioned by Erasmus in his letter to Pirkheimer of the 3rd June, 1524, which was taken by the painter into France. Bonifacius Amerbach was absent in that country, studying law at Avignon under Alciat, and afterwards at the University of Montpellier, for two years, from May 1522 to May 1524.[2] In his absence Erasmus sent him his own portrait as a present, and by the hands of the artist who painted it. If the date of the letter to Pirkheimer is correct, Holbein must have paid his visit to the South of France in the early spring of 1524. The letter to Pirkheimer, written in the beginning of June, states that the pictures had been sent to England and France "recently," but, according to Woltmann, Amerbach was back again in Basel in May, before the date of the letter, so that the sequence of events becomes a little confused. It is, of course, possible that Amerbach received the portrait on the eve of his departure from Montpellier, and that he may even have made the journey home in Holbein's company; while Erasmus may not have troubled himself to inform his correspondent that the portrait sent into France was already back again in Basel.

Nothing is known of this journey undertaken by Holbein, but it is not at all likely that he set out solely as the messenger of Erasmus, for the set purpose of delivering the portrait to Amerbach. It is much more probable that the desire for travel was still strong in him, and that the spirit of adventure, combined with the wish to discover fresh fields for the practice of his art, may have sent him forth as a wanderer again. In this connection, Dr. Ganz points out the somewhat strange coincidence that at this very time, the 19th April 1524, his patron, Jakob Meyer, set out from Basel for Lyon, with a band of two hundred men, in order to join the French expedition about to proceed against Milan.[3] Holbein may have seized the opportunity of travelling with him, not necessarily as a fighting man, but for the sake of company on his journey. The route followed was probably through Besançon, Dijon, Beaune, Macon, Lyon, and down the Rhône to Avignon, Nimes, and Montpellier. In these cities he

[1] Woltmann, ii. p. 99. [2] Woltmann, i. p. 290. [3] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxvi.

would see many fine examples of French Renaissance architecture, the influence of which, as already pointed out, can be detected in certain of his designs for glass-painting; and it is highly probable, also, that he must have had opportunities of studying to some extent the work of the Clouets and their school, with whose art, both in point of view and technique, his own had certain features in common, and that their portraits, with their enamel-like surfaces, and more particularly their lifelike and elegant portrait-studies in coloured chalks, must have made a considerable impression upon him.[1] Beyond such influences as these, to be seen in his later work, there is nothing to indicate such a journey, nor, if it were actually taken, for how long he was absent from Basel.[2] The scarcity of dated works between 1523 and 1526 may suggest a lengthy absence abroad, but this is more than counterbalanced by the fact that, with the exception of a couple of drawings, there is nothing from his hand, either portrait, or church picture, or wall decoration, so far discovered, which can be shown to have been carried out in France. It is possible, though not probable, that the greater number of the "Dance of Death" woodcuts, which were first published in 1538 at Lyon, were finished by 1523, and that Holbein, during his stay in that city, may have made arrangements with the Trechsels for their publication; but there is nothing to show that this was the objective of his journey. Moreover, everything seems to indicate that Holbein merely supplied the designs for these woodcuts to the engraver Lützelburger, and had no further monetary interest in them or their publication in which case his visit to Lyon need not necessarily have had anything to do with them.[3]

The two drawings to which reference has been made are in the Basel Collection, and are studies of two life-size sepulchral effigies of the early fifteenth century, in the cathedral of Bourges, representing the Duke Jehan de Berry, who died in 1416, and his wife, kneeling with hands clasped in prayer. In Holbein's day the monument was still in its original position in the private chapel of the Dukes of Berry, afterwards pulled down, when the figures were removed to the ambulatory of the choir. Other parts of the monument are now in the local museum. Holbein's masterly touch has vivified the some-

[1] See Ganz, *Holbein*, pp. xxv.–vi. [2] See Appendix (F).
[3] He may have gone, of course, as Lützelburger's representative.

what stiff and formal attitudes of these kneeling figures, in which, however, can be seen the beginnings of that realism and individuality which formed so marked a characteristic of the work of a later period of sculpture. These two fine drawings,[1] of which that of the Duchess (Pl. 57)[2] is the more beautiful, have almost the appearance of being studies from life instead of mere transcripts from the stone, and this effect is heightened by the skilful use the artist has made of touches of red and yellow crayons to his black chalk drawings. The sharp features of the Duchess, with high forehead and pointed nose, seen in profile, are full of expression. She wears the costume of the early fifteenth century, with a high ruff and heavy gold necklace, her golden hair enclosed in a fine net, and surmounted by a diadem set with square stones and jewels. It is now only possible to compare Holbein's truth of likeness to the original in the case of the statue of the Duke, for in that of the Duchess the head was broken off during the French Revolution, and was replaced by another some forty years later, lacking all expression, and with a royal crown instead of the ducal diadem.

These two studies, however, cannot have been made during Holbein's visit to Southern France in 1524; the draughtsmanship of them points to a later period, when his art had reached its greatest pitch of perfection. The position of Bourges, too, in the very centre of France, was far distant from the route he would take to reach Montpellier. Nor can they be connected with his first journey to England in 1526, for on that occasion he passed through Antwerp, his direct route being down the Rhine; and he made use, no doubt, of the same waterway on his return to Basel in 1528. In all probability the visit to Bourges took place in 1538. In the late summer of that year Holbein went with Philip Hoby to Joinville and Nancy on Henry VIII's business,[3] and took the opportunity of paying a visit of a few weeks' duration to his family and old friends in Basel. On his return to England he is supposed to have taken his eldest son with him as far as Paris, where he apprenticed him to the goldsmith Jakob David, and from Switzerland Bourges would be on the route to the capital of France.[4]

After Holbein's return to Switzerland from England in 1528 he

[1] Woltmann, 44 and 45.
[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.* iii. 25; Knackfuss, fig. 53.
[3] See Chapter xxi., Vol. ii. p. 138 *et seq.*
[4] See Vol. ii. p. 162.

THE DUCHESS OF BERRY

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

Basel Gallery



painted Erasmus again. A number of versions of this third type exist, of which the finest are the small Greystoke portrait, which in 1909 passed into the collection of the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, and the small roundel in the Basel Gallery. One of the versions, in the Parma Gallery, bears the date 1530. Erasmus had retired to Freiburg with Amerbach in 1528 in order to avoid the iconoclastic disturbances in Basel, and he must have given Holbein a sitting, most probably in that town, between 1528 and 1530. These later portraits closely follow the Longford Castle type as regards the pose and the position of the head, three-quarters face to the spectator's left, and the details of the dress; but the sitter appears considerably older, and in every instance the background is a plain one.

The Greystoke picture [1] has every appearance of being a work from Holbein's own brush. The masterly modelling, the fine and subtle draughtsmanship, the wonderful expression of the mouth and the still keen and brilliant eyes, are too good and too true to life to be the work of a mere copyist. The cheeks are more sunken and the face more heavily lined than in the portraits of 1523. The eyebrows are still dark, but the hair which straggles from below the black cap is white, and is drawn with all the minute care and delicacy with which Holbein always portrayed it in his portraits, and the stubble of a beard of a few days' growth is also indicated with the touch of a master. The hands, resting on a narrow ledge in front of him, and half concealed by the deep fur cuffs of his gown, are not so good, and are much less expressive than was usual with Holbein. The picture is in a fine state of preservation, and the colour scheme is rich and harmonious, though the plain blue background has turned to a greenish hue in the course of time. Upon it, to the left of the head, is a small white label, with the inscription, "Erasmus Roterodamus," which appears to be fastened to the wall with red wafers and a pin, like the label in the portrait of the Duchess of Milan. According to Sir Sidney Colvin,[2] both labels were probably the work of the same hand, and are of later date than the paintings. He suggests that the inscription on the "Erasmus" portrait was added to it when it was in the Arundel Collection.

[1] Reproduced in the *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xvi., November 1909, frontispiece; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 91.

[2] *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xvi., November 1909, pp. 67–71.

On the back of the panel is an interesting inscription, written, according to the same authority, in a hand of not later date than 1530–50. It runs as follows :—

> " Haunce Holbein me fecit
> Johanne[s] Noryce me dedit
> Edwardus Banyster me possidit."

John Norris, or Noryce—the name was spelt in various other ways—was one of the minor officials of Henry VIII's court, filling the part of gentleman usher, which he afterwards held under Edward VI and Queen Mary, dying in 1564 as chief usher of the Privy Chamber to the latter queen. Among other offices which he obtained was that of Controller of Windsor Castle. He was son and heir of Sir Edward Norris of Bray and Yattendon in Berkshire, and elder brother of that ill-fated Henry Norris, one of Henry's close companions, who was involved in the tragic fate of Anne Boleyn. The inscription shows that at some time, probably during Holbein's life, John Norris owned this portrait of Erasmus, and that he presented it to a friend named Edward Banister. According to Sir Sidney Colvin's researches, this Banister was also employed about the Court. In 1526 he appears as a gentleman usher out of wages for the county of Hants, and in 1539 he was one of the representatives of the same county appointed to receive Anne of Cleves at Calais and escort her to England. The inscription on the picture was probably written by Banister himself.

This portrait may have been the one in the possession of John, Lord Lumley, son-in-law of Henry Fitzalan, twelfth and last Earl of Arundel of that creation. In the Lumley inventory of 1590 it is described as " Of Erasmus of Roterdame, drawne by Haunce Holbyn." Among his other portraits by Holbein, Lord Lumley also possessed the full-length of the Duchess of Milan, and it is most probable that the label with the inscription was added to both portraits when in his collection. The " Erasmus " was afterwards in the famous collection of Thomas Howard, the great Earl of Arundel, from which it passed by bequest of Alathea, Countess of Arundel, to her grandson, Charles Howard, into that of the Greystoke branch of the Howard family, where it remained, at their seat in Cumberland, until its recent purchase by Mr. Morgan. The Earl of Arundel possessed two portraits

of Erasmus by Holbein,[1] the second being the Longford Castle picture. While in this collection the Greystoke version was engraved by Lucas Vorsterman, a very excellent print, undated, in which the figure is in reverse of the picture.[2] It was engraved again, when in the same collection, by Andreas Stock, the plate being dated from the Hague, 1628. In this engraving the position is the same as in the portrait, which suggests that Stock merely copied from Vorsterman, and not from the picture itself. In the inscription at the foot of Stock's engraving it is stated that the portrait from which it was taken was the one which Erasmus himself told Sir Thomas More he very greatly preferred to the one of him by Albrecht Dürer; but the statement appears to have no real foundation in fact. Whether the portrait was sent to England by Erasmus in charge of Holbein when he returned to England in 1532, as a present to some friend or admirer, or whether the artist brought it over in the ordinary way of his business, it is now impossible to say. It is now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

The Greystoke portrait closely resembles the Parma picture, which is regarded by most critics as an original work, though to the present writer it appears to be no more than a fine contemporary copy or adaptation of Mr. Morgan's picture or the Basel roundel. The Parma example,[3] in which Erasmus is shown with his hands holding open one of his own books, has the date 1530 on the plain background, two figures on either side of the head.[4] Documentary evidence[5] exists, showing that Holbein had painted one or more portraits of Erasmus at this period. One of them was in the possession of Goelenius, professor at Louvain, and in 1531 Johannes Dantiscus, Bishop of Kulm, and afterwards of Ermeland, was anxious to obtain a copy of it, and wrote asking to have this done for him by a painter of Malines. Goelenius, in reply, sent to his friend the original portrait as a gift. The Bishop, however, not to be outdone in generosity,

[1] Only one of these has Holbein's name attached to it in the Arundel inventory of 1655. The two are entered as "Erasmo di Holbein" and "Ritratto d'Erasmo Roterodamo." See above, p. 171, note 4.

[2] Reproduced in *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xvi., November 1909.

[3] Woltmann, 240. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 86.

[4] The much inferior version in the Besançon Museum (reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 215) is an almost exact replica of the Parma picture.

[5] See M. Curtze, *Beiblatt der Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 1874, ix. 537 ff.; Woltmann, vol. ii. p. 15; and Colvin, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xvi. p. 68.

returned the present, at the same time saying that the portrait was an earlier one than he had supposed, and that he wanted one of a more recent date. In answer to this Goelenius wrote that fortunately he was on terms of such close friendship with Holbein that he could get him to do anything he wished, and would procure from him a portrait of Erasmus which he had quite recently painted. Some portrait, whether an original or only a copy, was eventually sent, and it has been suggested that it was the portrait now in the Parma Gallery. When Dantiscus became Bishop of Ermeland, he would, in all probability, take the portrait with him ; and this district was afterwards devastated by the Swedes during the Thirty Years' War, and many of the art treasures of the province carried to Sweden. Some of these spoils of war became the property of Queen Christina, who took them with her to Italy, where she lived in later life, and among the works so taken, it is conjectured, may well have been the Erasmus portrait now at Parma.

The little roundel in the Basel Gallery (No. 324) (Pl. 58 (1)),[1] which is about four inches in diameter, forms part of the Amerbach Collection, and, no doubt, came into the possession of Bonifacius on the death of Erasmus. It agrees in all respects with the Greystoke portrait, though only the head and shoulders are shown, and it is not quite so masterly in its execution. It is very possibly the original study made by Holbein in Freiburg, upon which the Greystoke and other portraits were based. It has a plain blue-green background, and is perhaps not quite in its original state. There is a third "Erasmus" at Basel, the small panel in the Faesch Collection (No. 356),[2] a good old copy of the roundel in the Amerbach Collection. All three are mentioned by Patin. It would serve no useful purpose to enumerate and describe the many other versions of the roundel, the Greystoke, and the Longford portraits, which exist in various European collections at St. Petersburg,[3] Cassel, Karlsruhe, Vienna, Turin,[4] Rotterdam, Lausanne,[5] and elsewhere. As already stated,

[1] Woltmann, 13. Reproduced by Davies, p. 112 ; Knackfuss, fig. 114 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 90.

[2] Woltmann, 23.

[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 214 ; the hands and body follow the Longford picture, while the head is like the Parma version.

[4] Woltmann, 250. Reproduced by André Machiels, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, November 1911, p. 359, who regards it as an original work by Holbein.

[5] Woltmann, 171.

1. ERASMUS

Roundel

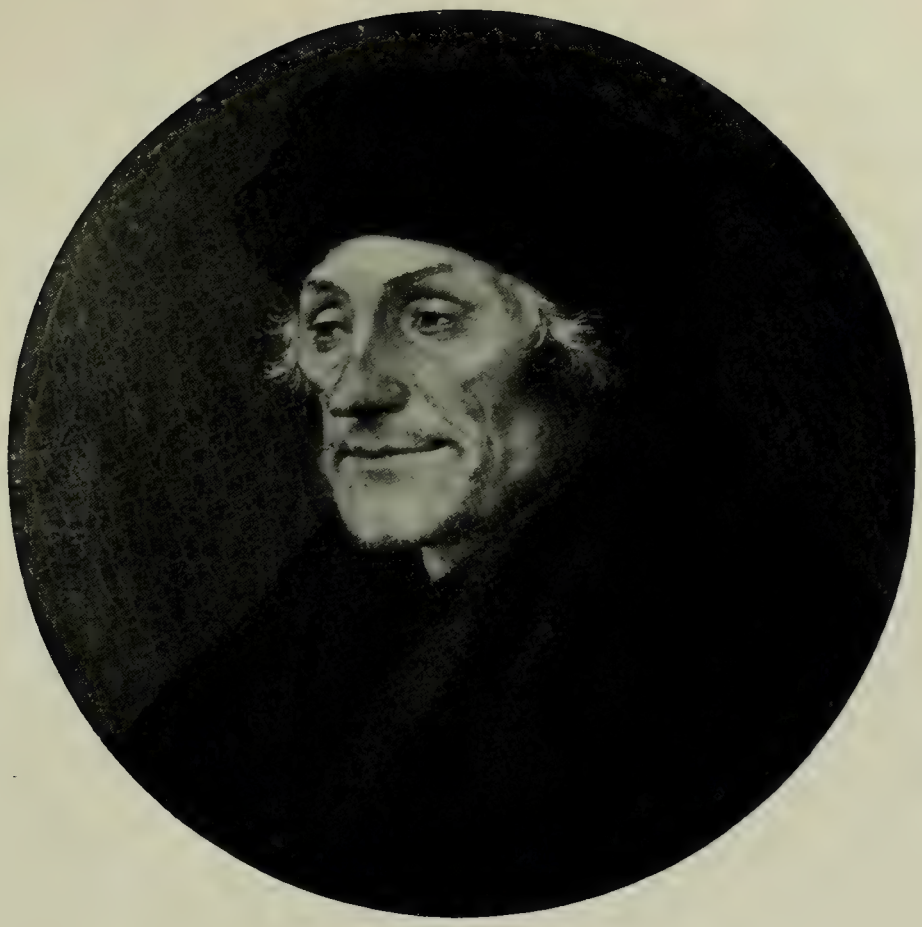
BASEL GALLERY

2. PHILIP MELANCHTHON

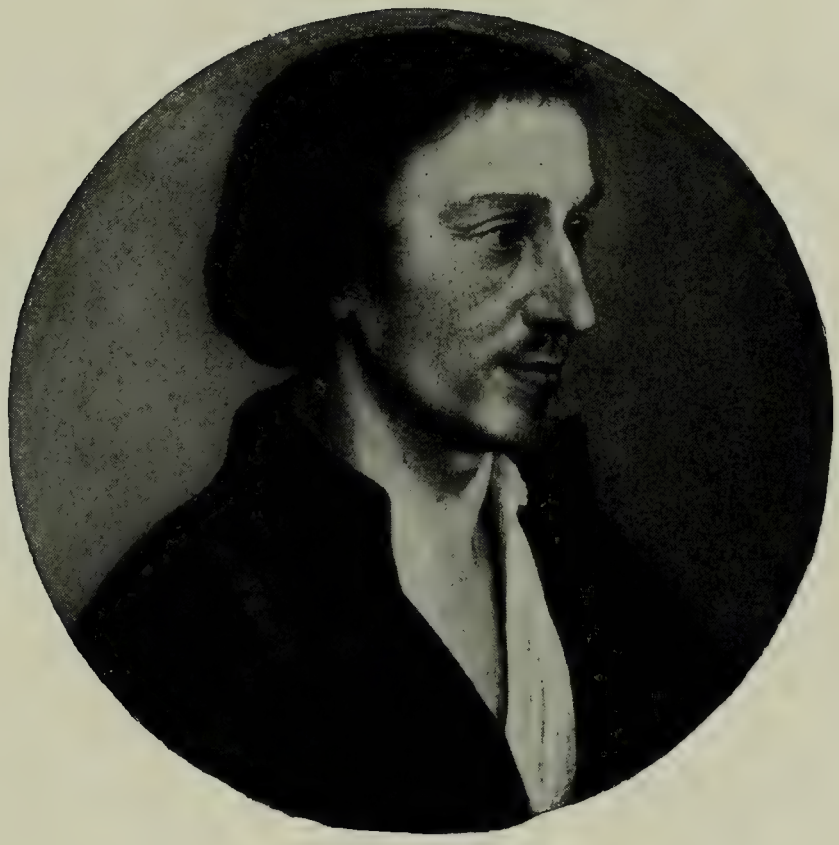
Roundel

PROVINZIAL MUSEUM, HANOVER





1



2

they were in great demand among the admirers of Erasmus, so that numerous copies must have been made. In the lifetime of Amerbach's son Basilius there were no less than five in Basel, and when Richard Strein of Vienna wrote to him asking him to procure him a portrait of the great humanist, Amerbach, in reply, wanted to know which of the five he would like copied. The copy by Pencz, already described, may have been taken from one of these later portraits rather than from the Longford portrait of 1523. The copy at Rotterdam is said to have been presented by the Basel Council to the Rotterdam Council in 1532.

Two other portraits of Erasmus by Holbein cannot be overlooked. These are the two beautiful woodcuts from his designs, which, from the fineness and accuracy of their execution, must have been cut by Hans Lützelburger. The first is a small round portrait,[1] showing the head and shoulders only, in profile, turned to the spectator's right, seen against a plain background, and inscribed round the plain circular framework " Erasmus Roterodam." It is evidently of about the same date as the Louvre portrait, and may have been one of the first of Holbein's designs engraved by Lützelburger, who settled in Basel about 1523. The delicate and rather emaciated features of the scholar have been reproduced with wonderful skill. It was first used on the back of the title-page of the *Adagiorum opus Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, published by Froben in 1533, and again in *Des. Erasmi Rot. Ecclesiastæ sive de ratione concionandi libri quatuor* (1535).

The second,[2] and still more beautiful, woodcut is considerably larger, being $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches high by 9 inches wide (Pl. 59). In his catalogue Amerbach calls it " Erasmus Rotterdamus in eim Ghüs." Erasmus is represented at full length, standing, turned three-quarters to the right, in his doctor's cap and furred gown, his right hand resting on the head of a truncated figure of Terminus, towards which he points with his other hand. The framework or " ghüs " within which he is placed shows to the fullest advantage Holbein's complete mastery of Renaissance design, and is equal to the finest contemporary Italian work of the kind. It is purer in style, and lighter and more elegant in effect, than the greater number of his earlier designs for woodcuts.

[1] Woltmann, 207. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 51.

[2] Woltmann, 206. Reproduced by Woltmann, i. 357, fig. 63 ; Knackfuss, fig. 112 ; Machiels, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, November 1911, p. 358 ; and elsewhere.

Two pillars with caryatid figures, with long beards and folded arms, and baskets of fruit on their heads, support a round arch above which on either side are nude figures with cornucopiæ, from which hang long wreaths of fruit and foliage. The whole is surmounted by a winged cherub above a lion's head, from the mouth of which hangs a tablet inscribed "ER. ROT." At the base a larger tablet is supported by two fish-tailed female figures. As a portrait this engraving is as fine as either the Longford or the Louvre pictures. The small head is full of force and character; and equally fine is the expression on the smiling face of the Terminus, while the treatment of the draperies is just as admirable. It is difficult to know which to admire the most, the beauty of the artist's design and draughtsmanship, or the wonderful fidelity of the engraver, who in cutting it has lost little or nothing of the delicacy of Holbein's touch, for both are masterly.

The original pear-wood block is in the Basel Gallery. Early proof impressions of it are in the British Museum, the Berlin and Munich Print Rooms, and elsewhere. These have a two-lined Latin inscription on the tablet at the base—

"Corporis effigiem si quis non vidit Erasmi,
Hanc scite ad vivum picta tabella dabit."

(If anyone has not seen Erasmus in his bodily shape, this cut, drawn from life, will give his counterfeit.) The design was evidently made for a complete edition of the works of Erasmus, but no such publication has been met with in which this impression with the single distich appears. The woodcut is first encountered in the complete edition of his writings published by Froben's son, Hieronymus, and Nic. Episcopius in 1540, with a four-lined inscription, in which Holbein's name is coupled with that of Erasmus in terms of high praise—

"Pallas Apellæam nuper mirata tabellam,
Hanc ait, æternum Bibliotheca colat.
Dædaleam monstrat Musis Holbeinnius artem,
Et summi Ingenii Magnus Erasmus opes."

No one but Lützelburger can have cut it, so that the design must have been made before Holbein's first visit to England. Why Froben made no earlier use of it, it is impossible to say.

The history of the double portrait of Erasmus and Froben, as far

ERASMUS

From a woodcut in the British Museum


·ER·ROT·
TERMINVS
Corporis effigiem si quis non uidit Erasmi,
Hanc scite aduiuum picta tabella dabit.

as it is known, has been already given. The version of Froben, at Hampton Court [1]—No. 603 (323)—is a drawing on parchment, afterwards fastened down on a panel, and roughly finished as a picture, and has little of the careful elaboration of Holbein's painted portraits. It is a half-length figure, less than life-size, turned to the right, the face seen almost in profile. The arms are folded, and the hands, thrust within the sleeves of his brown cloak, which is lined with fur at the neck, are not seen. He wears no cap, and his straight hair is growing thin. The head is seen against what now appears to be a window or opening, sea-green in colour, which is part of the original plain background, afterwards repainted by Von Steenwyck with various pillars and mouldings. In front is a narrow stone ledge, over the greater part of which hangs what appears to be a white cloth, on which is inscribed, "IOANNES FROBENIUS TYP. HOLBEIN P." which is not the original handiwork of the painter. The face is a kindly but ugly one, and bears out the character given to him by Erasmus, who was overcome with grief at his sudden death. "All the friends of the belles lettres," he wrote to a friend, "should put on mourning attire and shed tears at the death of this man, and should wreath his grave with ivy and flowers. Never before have I felt how great is the power of sincere friendship. I bore with moderation the death of my own brother; but what I cannot endure is the longing for Froben. So simple and sincere was his nature that he could not have dissembled had he wished. To show kindness to everyone was his greatest delight, and even if the unworthy received his benefits, he was glad. His fidelity was immovable, and as he himself never had evil in his mind, he was never able to cherish suspicion of others."

There is a similar portrait of Froben in the Basel Gallery (No. 357),[2] an old copy, which was presented to the Basel University by Christian von Mechel, who acquired it as an original work by Holbein from the publisher Enschede at Haarlem in 1792, and was transferred to the Gallery in 1811. In the letter making the gift he speaks of it as softer, richer, and more powerful than the usual Holbein

[1] Reproduced by Law, *Holbein's Pictures in Windsor Castle*, viii. p. 27, and in *Royal Gallery of Hampton Court*, p. 220; Sir C. Phillips, "The Picture Gallery of Charles I," *Portfolio Monograph*, 1896, p. 111; Davies, p. 28; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 207.

[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 208.

style. A third, and inferior, example was lent to the Tudor Exhibition in 1890 by Sir Henry B. St. John Mildmay, Bt. (No. 134), which is perhaps identical with the small portrait in oil which belonged to Walpole and was sold in 1842 at the Strawberry Hill sale for 19 guineas.

The genuineness of the Hampton Court portrait of Froben has been often disputed, and to-day the consensus of opinion is not in its favour. Both Waagen and Woltmann regarded it as a copy, and more recent writers, among them Dr. Ganz, hold the same view. Even those who consider it to be a genuine work by Holbein are forced to own that it is by no means a fine example of his portraiture. The head, however, has more character than is usually found in a copy, and, no doubt, its present condition is due to some extent to the mishandling it received from Von Steenwyck, who probably did not confine his attentions solely to the background. It is possible, therefore, to regard it as an original study by Holbein, which has suffered somewhat severely in the course of years. Mr. Ernest Law speaks of it as a genuine though not first-class example, and refers to the version at Basel as " little more than a clumsy imitation " of it.[1] The Basel Catalogue, on the other hand, says that the latter portrait, which is an old copy or else an original which has suffered severely from repainting, is " incomparably better than the seventeenth-century replica at Hampton Court." Woltmann considered the Basel version to be merely a late Netherlandish copy,[2] while Knackfuss says that it is " very bad as regards colouring." [3]

Another friend and correspondent of Erasmus, Philip Melanchthon, was painted by Holbein, though there is no evidence to show when or how they met. The small roundel in oils of the young German scholar in the Provinzial Museum at Hanover (Pl. 58 (2))[4] may perhaps have been done as a pendant to the circular " Erasmus " at Basel. It is almost exactly the same size, about four inches in diameter, and is carried out with an almost equal delicacy and freedom of touch, as though it were a study direct from nature. Melanchthon is shown nearly in full profile to the right, with dark smooth hair falling on his ears, and a scanty beard and moustache. His coat and plain white shirt are open

[1] Law, *Holbein's Pictures*, &c., p. 28.
[2] Woltmann, i. p. 289.
[3] Knackfuss, p. 78.
[4] Woltmann, 164. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 113 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 92.

in front, showing the bare chest. The background is grey, but may possibly have been at one time blue. The head itself is not free from retouching. It is preserved in its original circular box, the inner side of the cover being decorated in grey monochrome with a very beautiful design of foliage and fruit intermingled with the heads and figures of satyrs in the Renaissance style from Holbein's own hand, and across the centre a cartouche with the following inscription in gold: "Qui cernis tantum non, viva Melanthonis ora, Holbinus rara dexteritate dedit," [1] which is perhaps the sitter's own personal tribute to the skill of the painter. The style of the Renaissance decoration indicates that in all probability the portrait was painted during Holbein's third stay in Basel (1528–32).[2] Melanchthon attended the Imperial Diet at Speier in 1529,[3] and a little later visited his mother in Bretten, and it is by no means impossible that he also went to Freiburg to see Erasmus, and that while there, some time during 1530, Holbein painted the roundels of both friends. A second version of this portrait was in the possession of Horace Walpole, in which the inscription runs round the outer edge. It fetched fifteen guineas at the Strawberry Hill sale in 1842, and is now in the collection of Sir William van Horne in Montreal.

With these portraits of Erasmus and some of his most intimate friends may be placed Holbein's own portrait of himself (*Frontispiece*), the very exquisite drawing in the Basel Gallery (No. 320),[4] in which he is represented almost full face, wearing a large red hat, a brown-grey cloak or overcoat with bands of black velvet, and a white shirt tied with strings at the neck. He is beardless, with short dark-brown hair, and brown eyes. The study is on paper, and is drawn in Indian ink and coloured chalks, and washed with water-colour which has faded in parts. This drawing, like the portrait of Holbein's wife and children, and the one of Von Rüdiswiler of Lucerne by Ambrosius Holbein, has been at some time cut out round the outlines, and afterwards mounted on a greyish paper, which produces the slight effect of hardness which must certainly have been missing

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 92.

[2] On this point see Koegler, *Jahrbuch d. Pr. K.-S.*, 1911, and Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 239.

[3] Woltmann, ii. p. 359.

[4] Woltmann, 43. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 50 (in colours), and *Holbein*, frontispiece; Davies, p. 100; Knackfuss, fig. 21; Wornum, frontispiece, eng. by C. W. Sharpe.

in its untouched state.[1] In 1907 the plain blue background was carefully renewed from an old example.

Some writers have held that it is not absolutely certain that this drawing really represents the painter. In the Amerbach inventory of 1586 it is described as, " Item ein tafelen gehort darin ein conterfehung Holbeins mit trocken farben (a counterfeit of Holbein in dry colours, *i.e.* crayons), so im grossen kasten vnder Holbeins kunst ligt " ; and in the later inventories it is described in much the same way. Knackfuss, among others, says that from these words it is not positively to be concluded that the " counterfeit " was of Holbein himself. There can be little doubt, however, that Amerbach intended to describe it as a portrait of Holbein by himself ; if it had been a drawing of some unknown sitter he would have so described it. As far back as 1676 it was published by Patin in his edition of the *Praise of Folly* as Holbein's portrait from his own hand. It bears, too, a strong likeness to the portraits of Holbein as a boy by the elder Hans, both in the " St. Paul " picture and in the drawing of 1511 of the two brothers at Berlin. There is the same massive head, with its fine forehead, breadth of cheek-bones, strong chin, and firm mouth. It has great resemblance, too, when due allowance has been made for the passing of twenty years or so, to the miniature portraits of himself which he painted at the end of his life. It may be accepted, indeed, without reservation as a genuine portrait of Holbein, of about the date 1523–5, when he was some twenty-six years old.[2] As a portrait it is a magnificent study. The face is a strong one, of a somewhat serious cast, but with a suggestion of humour about the finely shaped mobile mouth and in the clear brown eyes. The broadly built head with its high forehead indicates strength of character and intellectual capacity, and there is a quiet dignity and a sense of power in the whole countenance and in the carriage of the youthful figure, which one would expect to find in the likeness of a painter possessed, as Holbein was, of such brilliant technical abilities and so wonderful a creative genius.[3]

[1] According to Dr. Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 232, this cutting-out was in all probability done in the eighteenth century, when at the same time the hat and mantle were freshened with water-colours.

[2] Dr. Ganz points out (*Holbein*, p. 232), that it was not until after his journey into France, in 1523–4, that he made use of coloured chalks in his drawings.

[3] Another drawing of this period in the Basel Gallery, the Young Man with the big hat, is described in Vol. ii. pp. 259–60.

CHAPTER IX

DESIGNS FOR BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS

Holbein's work for the Basel publishers—Imperfection of the cutting of his earlier book illustrations—His connection with Hans Lützelburger—His first title-page—More's *Utopia*—the Table of Cebes—Luther's translation of the New Testament—Title-page to the quarto edition—Work for Luther's translation of the Old Testament—"The Sale of Indulgences"—"Christ the True Light"—Woodcuts representing incidents of common life, dancing, merrymaking, &c.—Initial letters and alphabets—Trade-marks and devices for printers.



HROUGHOUT the whole period of his first residence in Basel a considerable part of Holbein's time was occupied with the production of designs for book illustrations, such as title-pages, head and tail-pieces, ornamental borders, initial letters, and printers' marks. Including the "Dance of Death" and Old Testament illustrations, and the various alphabets of his designing, Woltmann enumerates more than three hundred woodcuts or metal engravings, large or small, for which Holbein made the drawings. Much of his work of this kind was done for Froben, but he was also frequently employed by Adam Petri, Thomas Wolff, and other printers and publishers.

The old contention that Holbein himself cut the blocks bearing his own designs, which at one time produced much acrimonious dispute and a voluminous literature, has long since been abandoned, and there is absolutely nothing to be said in its favour. He must, however, have had a thorough working knowledge of the technical side of wood-engraving, and of the limits within which it was necessary to confine his art; and within those limits he produced the most splendid results.

A number of his earlier designs were not cut in wood, but in metal. The method was similar to that of wood-cutting, the drawing being left in relief, as on the wood block, a process exactly opposite to copperplate engraving, in which the lines to be reproduced are incised. Several of his title-pages and ornaments from metal blocks bear the initials I.F. upon them, and it was at one time considered

that they were probably the work of Froben himself,[1] who is described more than once as "chalcographer," or a worker in metal. The term, however, may mean only a designer and caster of type, which was a trade Froben followed side by side with that of a publisher. The I.F. of these engravings was not Froben, but Jakob Faber, who was the best of the cutters in metal who worked after Holbein. Froben, no doubt, employed a permanent staff of engravers, both for his own publications and also for the sale of blocks and plates to other publishers. Faber was possibly one of those who found more or less regular employment in his service, and another was the engraver with the signature "C.V.," who engraved the eight metal cuts in illustration of the Lord's Prayer, which appeared about 1523, badly printed, in two rare editions of the *Precatio Dominica* of Erasmus, copies of which are included in the William Mitchell Collection in the British Museum. The proofs in the Basel Gallery have German text; the Mitchell set, with a clause of the Paternoster in French printed at the top of each cut, is a unique state, and the impressions are very early and sharp. The same "C.V." engraved in metal the Evangelists in the Greek Testaments of 1524 and 1540.

One of the finest of Faber's metal-cuts is the folio title-page issued by Cratander in 1525, representing Christ before God the Father, surrounded by a great crowd of boy-angels, in the lunette at the top, the symbols of the four Evangelists in niches shown in perspective at the sides, and the Apostles at the foot. This title-page is made up of four separate plates, each of which bears the initials "I.F."[2] Quite recently (1913) the British Museum has received from the National Art-Collections Fund a rare Book of Hours, printed at Lyon in 1548, containing fourteen metal-cuts by Faber after Holbein's designs.

According to Woltmann, many copper plates after Holbein's designs were still in existence in Basel as late as 1852, in the possession of the family of a publisher named Haas, but were subsequently sold on a division of the property, all further traces of them being lost.[3] These metal engravings of Holbein's book ornaments as a rule do but little justice to the original designs, and compare very unfavourably with the later wood engravings cut by Hans Lützel-

[1] Including Woltmann, in the first edition of his book, Eng. trans., p. 205.
[2] The same initials occur on the title-page to Hall's *Chronicle*, 1548. See Vol. ii. p. 79.
[3] Woltmann, Eng. trans., p. 205.

burger. They miss much of the strength and character of Holbein's line, and are marked by a hardness of effect which is by no means pleasing.

Many of the earlier wood engravings, too, suffer in the same way from the imperfection of the cutting, inferior workmen having been employed to reproduce them, just as in the case of the book illustrations of Ambrosius Holbein, who was employed by Froben quite as often as his brother Hans, and whose work also suffered from inadequate translation. It thus becomes difficult, in the case of several unsigned prints, to decide which of the two young men was the designer of them. In these earlier efforts, too, Hans had not reached to that pitch of excellence in adapting his design to the requirements of the wood-cutters to which he attained some years later, when he was working in conjunction with Lützelburger, nor had his powers of draughtsmanship and composition yet found their complete expression. Having at length met with an engraver who could do full justice to his ideas, and one who was as great a master in one branch of art as he himself was in another, Holbein's genius for decorative design matured rapidly, so that the two men between them produced works in this field which have never been surpassed. They worked together from the autumn of 1522 until Lützelburger's death and Holbein's departure from Basel in 1526.

Modern researches have failed to glean much information about the life and career of Lützelburger. On a tablet below a wood engraving of his cutting representing a battle between peasants and naked men in a fir wood in Utopia, designed by the unknown Augsburg master N.H., he signs himself "HANNS. LEVCZELLBVRGER. FVRMSCHNIDER. 1.5.2.2." At a later date, on the proofs of Holbein's "Dance of Death" alphabet, he calls himself "Hanns Lützelburger, furmschneider, genant Franck," that is, "Hans Lützelburger, wood-engraver, called Franck." This is printed in movable type, the first H being an ornamented Roman capital, while the other letters of the name are in the German character. He was one of the group of wood-engravers who were working at Augsburg about 1516–19, under the direction of Jost de Negker, on the blocks for the Emperor Maximilian, and his name is written or his monogram cut upon the back of nine of the "Triumph" blocks, still preserved at Vienna, and he also cut nine of the series of "Saints connected with the House of Habsburg" in 1516–17. All available evidence indicates that

the "Battle of Naked Men" was engraved in Augsburg. In the same year, 1522, Lützelburger cut an alphabet for the printer Schöffer at Maintz, of which the letter L is signed "H.L.F.," and the same date and initials occur on two specimen ornamental alphabets evidently designed by the same unknown artist.[1] Whether he was residing at Maintz at the time is uncertain, but by the autumn of 1522 Lützelburger had moved to Basel, and was at work on Adam Petri's folio New Testament. There he remained until his death in the summer of 1526, in constant collaboration with Holbein, engraving, among many other designs, the "Dance of Death" woodcuts and many of the Old Testament illustrations. What little is known of him points rather to Augsburg than to Basel as his place of birth, though, according to Herr His-Heusler's researches, a family of that name was then living in Basel, the names of both a Michael and a Jakob Lützelburger appearing in the baptismal register of St. Leonhard between 1529 and 1533; while the same name occurs frequently in the parish register of the adjacent town of Colmar during the first half of the sixteenth century. Further documents discovered by His-Heusler show that Lützelburger died in Basel before the 23rd June 1526, and that he was insolvent at the time. Among his creditors were the printer, Melchior Trechsel, of Lyon, for an advance of 27 florins 15 shillings, and Hans zum Sessel (Froben), for 3 florins 10 shillings. Trechsel, the publisher of the "Dance of Death" and "Old Testament" woodcuts, on hearing of Lützelburger's death, also demanded certain wood blocks ordered by his firm, for which the money had been advanced, upon which the deceased had been at work. These blocks were sent to him on the condition that he appointed some person of substance in Basel as security, in case some other creditor proved to have prior claims on the estate; and in accordance with this arrangement he appointed Johan Lukas Iselin as his surety.[2] In the list of Lützelburger's furniture and effects seized by the court he is described merely as "Hans Formschneider," but there is no doubt that this "form-cutter" was Lützelburger, who at the time of his death was cutting the block

[1] See Campbell Dodgson, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. x., Feb. 1907, pp. 319–22; also the same writer's Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts in the British Museum, vol. ii., 1911, p. 295, &c.

[2] See His, "Hans Lützelburger," &c., in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 2e Période, vol. iv. pp. 481–9 (December 1871).

of "The Waggoner" for the "Dance of Death," which he left incomplete.

Holbein drew all these designs directly on the wood block. There is not a single sketch or study in existence for any one of the very numerous book illustrations and decorations which he produced.[1] His title-pages consist, in almost every case, of an ornamental framework of Renaissance design with small panels on either side containing figure subjects, usually taken from classical history or mythology, and across the bottom a larger panel in which the chief subject is depicted. These title-pages do not always consist of a single block, but of four separate borders or strips, not always used together, but combined with others, or used singly as chapter-headings or side-pieces. These title-pages, designed in the first place for some particular book, were thus afterwards often made to serve for the ornamentation of other publications, with which at times their subjects had very little connection; and they were also copied by various publishers and printers in other cities of Switzerland and in Germany and elsewhere.

Holbein's earliest design for this purpose, drawn in 1515, shortly after his arrival in Basel, and signed with the abbreviated name "Hans Holb.," has been already described.[2] This title-page, with its nine little cupids, which has suffered from inferior cutting, but nevertheless has considerable charm, was first used by Froben in the winter of 1515, and appeared in a number of books issued during the next five years, including More's *Utopia*, published by Froben in 1518. The first of his designs from ancient history formed the title-page to *Æneæ Platonici Christiani de immortalitate animæ*, issued by Froben in 1516, and also appeared in the Basel edition of the *Utopia*, and again in Erasmus' *Praise of Matrimony* in 1518. It represents the story of Mucius Scævola and Lars Porsena (Pl. 60),[3] but has been so badly cut that much of the dramatic force of Holbein's composition has been lost. When Porsena, the Etruscan king, was blockading Rome, after his attempted entry into the city had been frustrated by

[1] Mr. Frederic Lees, however, mentions as clearly by Holbein, "a drawing for the celebrated *Dance of Death* series, and the only one of the forty which now exists," which is in the collection of M. Emile Wauters in Paris.—*The Studio*, vol. li. No. 213, p. 213 (December 1910).

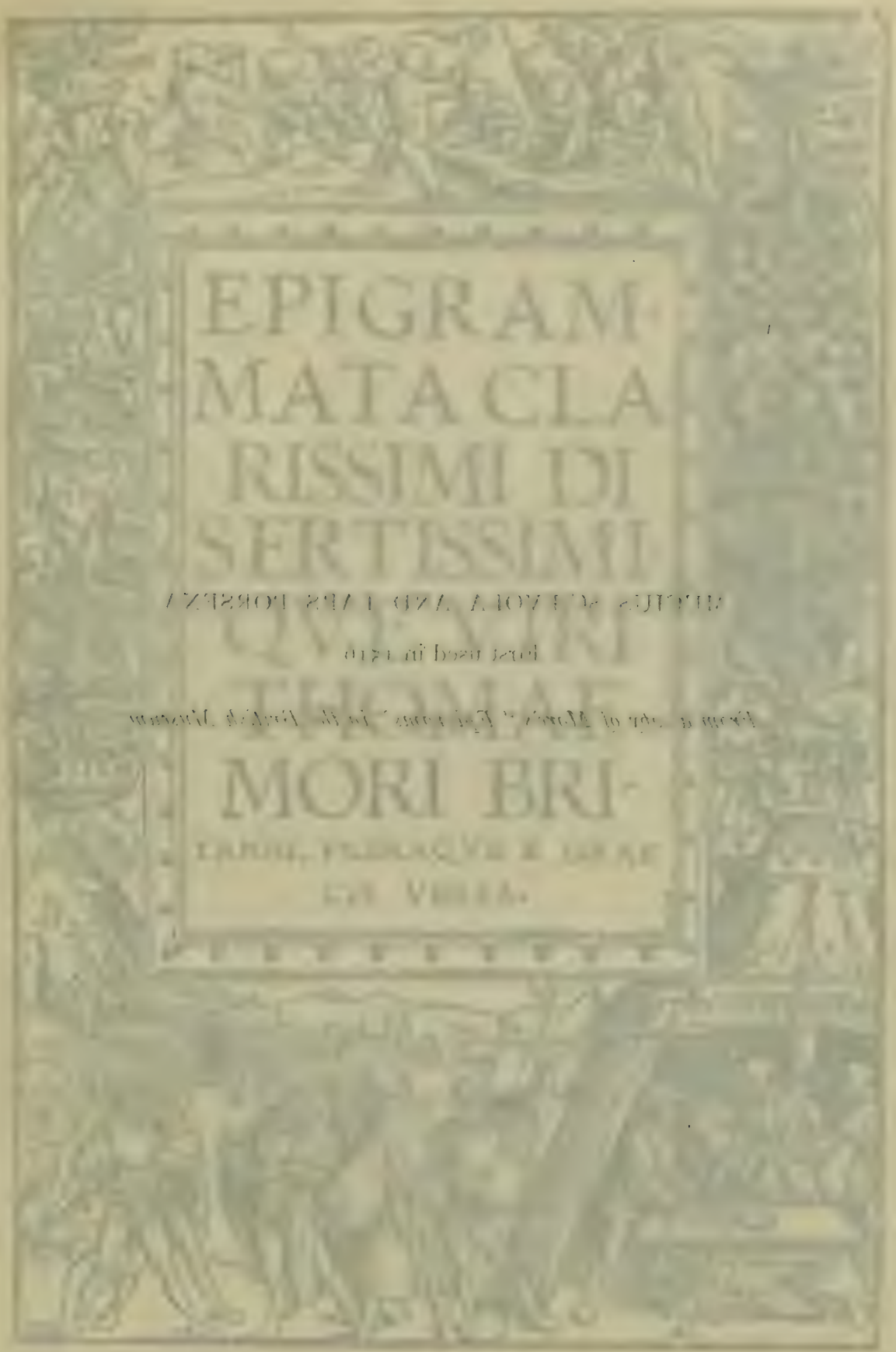
[2] See pp. 44–5 and Pl. 11.

[3] Woltmann, 223. Reproduced by Butsch, *Die Bücher-Ornamentik der Renaissance*, Pl. 45; and by Mantz, *Hans Holbein*, p. 26.

the bravery of Horatius Cocles, Mucius, a young Roman nobleman, resolved to rid his country of the invader. In disguise he entered the hostile camp, and, approaching the tent in which Porsena sat, with his secretary, dressed in similar fashion to his master, by his side, plunged his dagger into the latter's body, mistaking him for the king. He was seized by the guards, and condemned to death, but thrust his right hand into a fire which was already lighted for a sacrifice, and held it there without flinching, to show how little he heeded pain. Amazed at his bravery, Porsena allowed him to go free; and Mucius afterwards received the name of Scævola, or the left-handed, on account of his courage. Holbein has depicted the two chief incidents of this legendary story side by side across the bottom of the title-page. On the right is an open tent, in which Mucius is stabbing the secretary, who is seated at a table by the side of the king. On the left, Mucius, held by a guard, plunges his hand into the fire in the presence of Porsena and his courtiers. Over each of the principal characters is a label with his name, and in the background is a small walled city labelled "Roma." The figures, which are clad in sixteenth-century costume, are short and stumpy, these faults, no doubt, being exaggerated by the inadequate rendering of the engraver. The sides of the page consist of two narrow panels of conventional foliated design, with small figures, springing from vases, while the upper border contains a group of naked children, blowing trumpets and dragging one of their number in triumph. A small shield in the middle of the left-hand border contains Holbein's initials, "H.H."

Froben, on the recommendation of Erasmus, undertook the publication of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* in 1518, and the edition was lavishly ornamented with woodcuts, title-pages, and initials, in honour of the author. The book had been already published in Louvain in the winter of 1516. Gerardus Noviomagus, of Nimeguen, writing to Erasmus on November 12th of that year, says that his friend Theodoricus has undertaken to print it, and that Paludanus will show him "a cut of the island by a great artist," in order that Erasmus may make any suggestions he may think necessary.[1] In Froben's edition this "cut of the island" was drawn by Ambrosius Holbein, as also the charming little picture of Hythlodæus recounting his

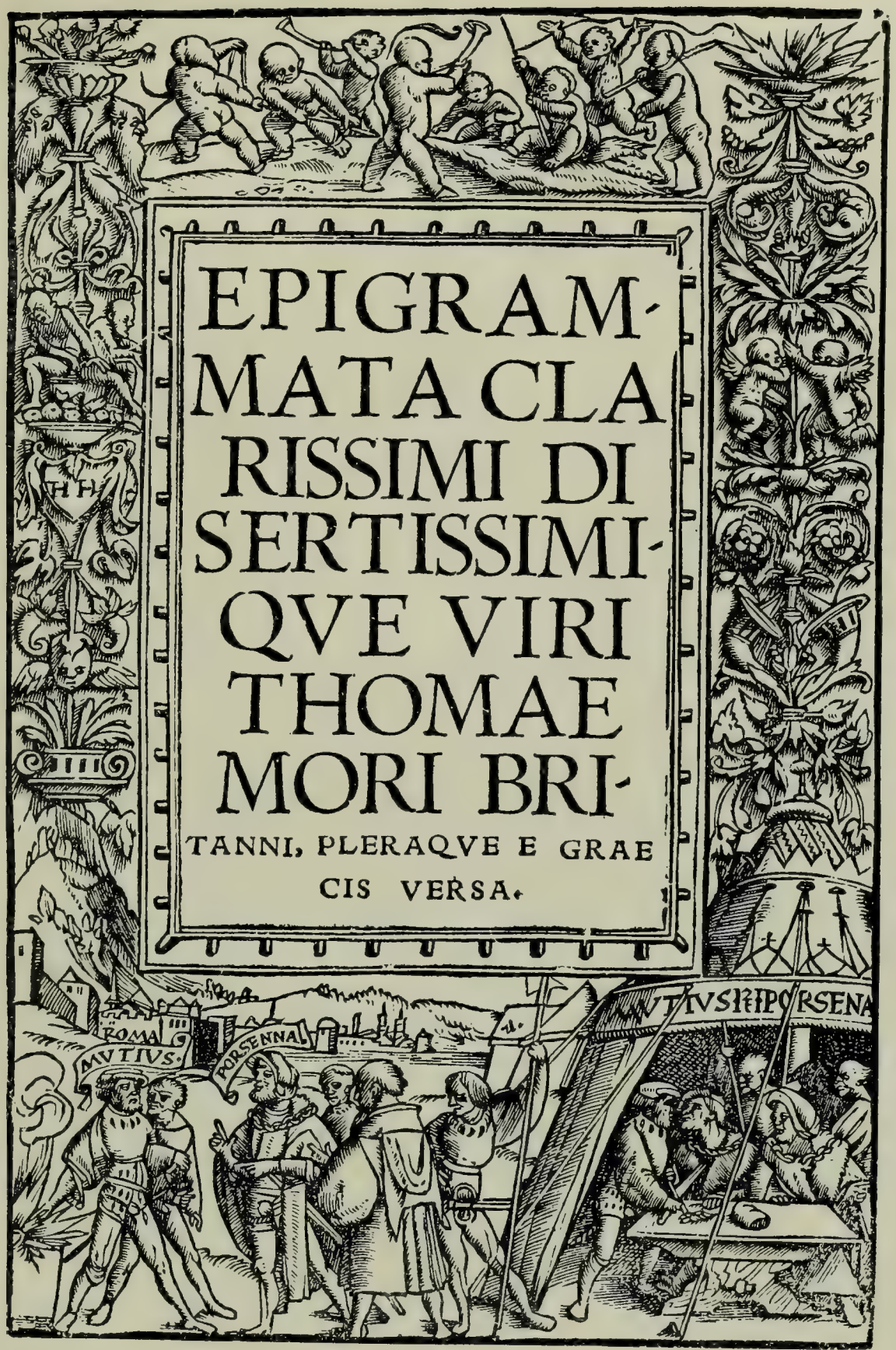
[1] *Calendars of Letters and Papers, Hen. VIII*, vol. ii. pt. i. 2540.


EPIGRAM
MATA CLA
RISSIMI DI
SERTISSIMI
MORI BRI-

MUCIUS SCÆVOLA AND LARS PORSENA

First used in 1516

From a copy of More's "Epigrams" in the British Museum



EPIGRAMMATA CLARISSIMI DISERTISSIMIQVE VIRI THOMAE MORI BRITANNI, PLERAQVE E GRAECIS VERSA.

adventures in Utopia. As already stated, two of Hans Holbein's designs were re-used for this work, the title-page with the children for the dedication to Ægidius, and the "Scævola" for More's *Epigrams*, which were added to the volume, together with others by Erasmus, for which Urs Graf provided a title-page with the beheading of St. John the Baptist. The title-page to the book itself, with the story of Tarquin and Lucrece,[1] was designed by Ambrosius, who in this instance took a much more important share in the work of illustration than his brother, and he was possibly the "great artist" of whom Noviomagus spoke in his letter.

The title-page for the Statute Book of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, published in 1520, with the beautiful design of the patron saints of that city on the back, has been already described.[2] It is more finely cut than most of these earlier book illustrations, as is also the title-page representing the "Table of Cebes" (Pl. 61), perhaps the most important work of the kind undertaken by Holbein before his connection with Lützelburger began.[3] The unknown cutter of this block has rendered Holbein's design with considerable truth and artistic feeling. It is founded on the Πιναξ or "Table," a philosophical work of Cebes of Thebes, the disciple and friend of Socrates, a book which enjoyed a great popularity. It gives an allegorical picture of human life, as explained by an old man to a circle of youths, and is intended to show that true happiness is only to be attained by the cultivation of the mind and the possession of real virtue. The "Picture" described in the book was shown to the sage in a temple of Chronos, and was a painting containing many figures, representing the progress of man towards the desired goal. Holbein has followed the text very closely. The whole picture is surrounded by a wall, which indicates the limits of human life. Outside this wall, at the bottom of the design, are groups of naked children, representing the souls of those who have not yet entered life. They are playing and fighting, and some are begging admittance of the old man, labelled "Genius," who stands beneath the archway of the portal. On the right, within the first courtyard, is the winged, naked figure of

[1] Woltmann, A. H., 4. Reproduced by Butsch, Pl. 43. Already used by Froben in more than one book in the previous year (1517).

[2] Woltmann, 217, 218. See p. 111.

[3] Woltmann, 227. Reproduced by Butsch, Pl. 54; Knackfuss, fig. 50; Mantz, p. 43.

Fortune on her rolling sphere, between two groups of people, on the one side those on whom she has smiled and on the other the unfortunate ones, who are railing at her; on the left is the seated figure of a woman, richly dressed, representing Seduction or Persuasion, with her attendant ladies as False Opinions. She holds out a gold cup to tempt the newcomer to life from the true path. Behind, gazing over the wall into the second courtyard, is the Traveller on life's journey. He next encounters Avarice, Lust, Incontinence, and other pitfalls, all represented by small and characteristic groups of figures. Then, passing through a gate, he follows a winding road, encountering on the way Pain and Sorrow, the latter an old woman crouching in a ruined hut, who threatens him with a whip, until he is welcomed at a further gateway by Penitence, who holds out both hands in welcome. All danger, however, has not yet been overtaken, for within he meets with False Discipline, a grandly dressed lady and her attendants, but he gives her only a sidelong glance as he hastens forward. The road now becomes rougher and narrower, and he comes next upon a group of people engaged in the pursuit of all the arts and sciences, which they regard as the end of life. After this he has to clamber up steep rocks, which he does with the help of Fortitude and Courage, the latter holding a golden cup in either hand. Further on, at the entrance to the innermost enclosure, he kneels before True Discipline, who, in the guise of a saint, with a halo, stands on a small pedestal, attended by Truth and Conviction, From here he enters the Castle of True Happiness, and again kneels. this time to receive the laurel crown, the reward for his avoidance of all evil and error on his life's journey, which is placed on his head by Happiness, who sits enthroned in the centre, in front of a castellated building. She wears a crown and holds a sceptre, and her head is surrounded by a halo of brilliant light. On either side are groups of the Virtues. Many of the small figures in this design have great charm, and the whole composition is well arranged and full of interest. Holbein has signed it on one of the stones of the wall in the lower left-hand corner with his initials in the form of a monogram, a small H within a larger one. This woodcut was first used in the edition of Tertullian published by Froben in 1521, and in the following year it formed the title-page of Erasmus' Latin edition of the New Testament. It became very popular, and was frequently used for

CORNUCOPIA
"THE TABLE OF CERES"

"THE TABLE OF CEBES"

First used in 1521

From a copy of Perotto's "Cornucopiæ" in the British Museum



CORNVCO

PIAE, SEV LATINAE LINGVAE COMMENTARII LOCVPLETISSImi, Nicolao Perotto, Sipuntino pontifice authore, tanta ad ueterum ſcriptorũ, codicumq; fidem, diligẽtia recogniti: unde deprompti ſunt, tantaq; ſolertia, diuerſitate characterum, & luce diſtincti, ut nulla ſuperiorum æditionum, cum hac iure certare queat. Cætera quæ hoc uolumine complectuntur, ſequens indicabit pagina.

VALEN. CVRIO.

BASILEAE,
MENSE MARTIO.
ANNO M. D. XXXII.

Cum gratia & Priuilegio.

dictionaries, lexicons, and similar publications during the next sixty years, being copied and imitated by numerous printers.

The first fruits of the collaboration of Holbein and Lützelburger appeared in an edition of Luther's German translation of the New Testament, which was issued by Adam Petri in Basel in December 1522. For this Holbein drew a very beautiful title-page,[1] which, although it bears no name or initials, is unmistakable in its authorship (Pl. 62). The sides of the design are occupied with niches within which stand St. Peter and St. Paul, grandly conceived figures of great nobility and dignity. St. Peter, on the left, has a great key in one hand, and an open book in the other, from which, with head and eyes cast down, he is reading. On the right is St. Paul, with a long, flowing beard, holding a sword across the open volume of his gospel. The architectural background is simple, with shell ornamentation behind the heads of the two saints. In the four corners of the page are the symbols of the four Evangelists—the Angel, Eagle, Lion, and Bull—which serve as heraldic supporters to the volumes of the gospels. In the centre at the top are the arms of Basel, with the motto "INCLYTA BASILEA," and at the bottom is placed the printer's mark, a naked child riding on a harnessed lion, and bearing a standard with Petri's monogram, and antedated 1523, the background filled in with roses, a very fine design. A second edition of this folio volume was published in March 1523, and at the same time one in octavo. In the latter the title-page[2] closely follows the one in the folio edition, and the book is also embellished with other woodcuts of Holbein's designing. On the first page of each gospel is a cut of the figure of the Evangelist enclosed within a framework of Renaissance design (Pl. 63).[3] The first three are each shown within a room, on the wall of which is a framed picture illustrating that part of the career of Christ most fully treated by the respective writers. St. Matthew looks up from his writing, and listens to the kneeling Angel, who raises a finger in admonition. The picture on the wall represents Christ in the manger, with Mary kneeling, and Joseph kindling a fire. St. Mark is seen from behind, deep in thought, the Lion crouching by his side. The picture hanging above him is of Christ rising from the Tomb. St. Luke, busily writing,

[1] Woltmann, 215. Reproduced by Butsch, Pl. 57.
[2] Woltmann, 216.
[3] Woltmann, 184–7.

wears a high cap, the Bull standing at the back of the desk. Christ on the Cross forms the subject of the picture on the wall. In each of these three pictures the Evangelist's desk or writing-table and seat form an interesting feature, as each one is of a different design, and illustrates the furniture of Holbein's own day. St. John is represented in the wilderness, seated among rocks, writing his gospel, his candle sheltered from the wind by stones, and the Eagle looking down upon it. Christ appears in glory in the sky over the distant mountains, and the saint is gazing up at the vision. This woodcut is without an ornamental framework. Four other designs by Holbein are included in the volume.[1] At the head of the Acts of the Apostles is a representation of the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Epistle to the Romans is headed by the figure of St. Paul, preaching, his sword under his arm, beneath a richly-decorated portal. The other two represent the Conversion of Saul and St. Peter's Vision of the Unclean Beasts, and there are also a number of initial letters (Pl. 63). The beautiful engraving of the title-page and many of the woodcuts points to the hand of Lützelburger, though none of them are signed by him. Another fine woodcut with the figure of St. Paul, with sword and book, standing within an architectural niche, is to be found in the Greek New Testament issued by T. Platter of Basel in 1540.[2]

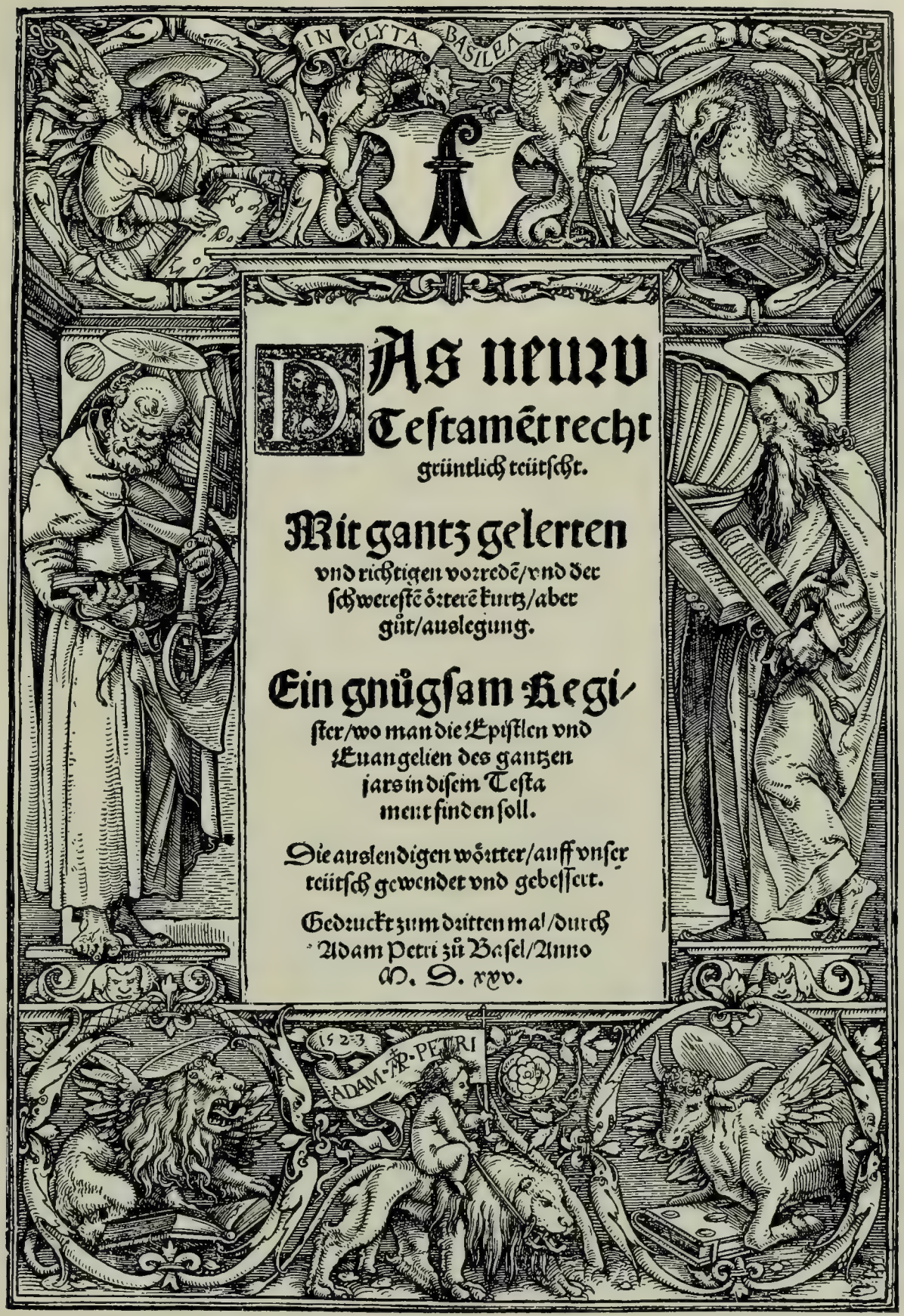
In the same year, 1523, a second Basel publisher, Thomas Wolff, issued a quarto edition of Luther's translation of the New Testament, in the decoration of which both Holbein and Lützelburger were employed. The title-page [3] shows Holbein's fertility of invention, his power of dramatic representation, and his sense of style to the greatest advantage. In the centre of the upper border St. John is baptizing the Saviour in the river Jordan, the angel standing on the bank with his garments, and on either side are the symbols of the four Evangelists. The lower border contains Wolff's device, a philosopher in a niche enjoining silence, his monogram, and the motto, "Digito Compesce Labellum," and on either side of it the Vision of St. Peter and the Conversion of St. Paul, who, dressed in German costume, is flung from his horse. On the right-hand border St. Paul is shown on the island of Melita, shaking off the viper from his hand into the fire,

[1] Woltmann, 188–91.
[2] Woltmann, 192. Reproduced in *Holbein*, "Great Engravers" Series (A. M. Hind), 1912.
[3] Woltmann, 213.

TITLE-PAGE TO LUTHER'S "NEW TESTAMENT"

First used in 1522

From a copy in the British Museum



DAs neuw Testamẽtrecht

grüntlich teütscht.

Mit gantz gelerten

vnd richtigen vorredẽ/vnd der schwereſtẽ örterẽ kurtz/aber gůt/auslegung.

Ein gnůgſam Regiſter/wo man die Epiſtlen vnd Euangelien des gantzen jars in diſem Teſtament finden ſoll.

Die auslendigen wörter/auff vnſer teütſch gewendet vnd gebeſſert.

Gedruckt zum dritten mal/durch Adam Petri zů Baſel/Anno M. D. xxv.

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

Woodcuts, and Initial Letters used on the first page of each gospel, in the 1523 edition of Luther's New Testament

From a copy in the British Museum

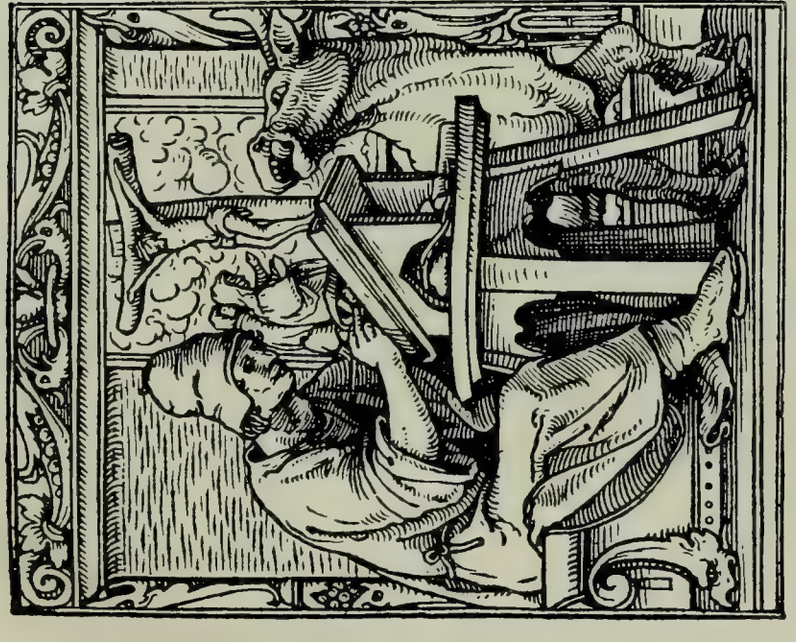
















and in the background the wreck of the ship; on the left-hand border is a representation of the Baptism of the Treasurer of the King of Ethiopia by St. Philip, while in the distance is depicted the journey of the same eunuch along a hilly road shaded by trees. He is riding in a small four-wheeled carriage, drawn by two horses tandem fashion, with the driver mounted on the after one—one of the methods of travelling in Holbein's own day. This title-page is a masterpiece of the engraver's art, and is signed "H.L.FVR." on the footstool on which St. Paul is kneeling, in the lower border. Holbein also furnished twenty-one illustrations to the Revelation of St. John for the same edition,[1] which, however, for the most part were very badly cut, so that Lützelburger cannot have been the engraver of them. They were used again in Adam Petri's folio New Testament of the same year. They are particularly interesting as representing the same subjects as those treated by Dürer in his first important work, which must have been known to Holbein, who, however, has borrowed very little in his rendering of the Visions. He shows less imagination and grandeur of conception than Dürer, but follows the text with even closer fidelity, and treats each subject with greater simplicity and clearness.[2] The last one of the series, the Angel showing the Saint the New Jerusalem (Pl. 70 (3)), contains a view of Lucerne with its covered bridge.

For Adam Petri's reprint of Luther's translation of the Old Testament, published in December 1523, for which a title-page was provided by Urs Graf, Holbein, in addition to numerous initial letters, was the designer of the large woodcut which was placed at the head of the first chapter of Genesis, representing the Creation of Eve,[3] a very beautiful conception, in which God the Father is uplifting Eve from the side of Adam, while a small angel tugs at his mantle. The earlier days of the Creation are also represented—the Earth as a small island with various animals upon it, surrounded by a strip of water containing fish, and round this again a ring of clouds and stars, and a final circle of angels, above whom the Almighty is shown again, blessing his work. In the four corners are placed the heads of the four winds. Several other illustrations were drawn by Holbein for this edition, but in most instances they are marred by bad cutting.

One of the finest of his designs for woodcuts is the one representing

[1] Woltmann, 150–70. [2] See Woltmann, i. 218–20. [3] Woltmann, 171.

the Death of Cleopatra and the Sacrileges of Dionysius of Syracuse (Pl. 64),[1] first used by Froben in 1523 as the title-page for several works by Erasmus. The framework, in the form of a sculptured monument in the Italian style, is exceptional among Holbein's work as a book-illustrator, being shown in marked perspective as though seen from the right. At the foot, beneath an arch, the dying Cleopatra, at full length on the ground, holds an asp in each hand. On either side is represented an act of sacrilege on the part of the Tyrant of Syracuse. On the right he is reaching up to pluck off the golden beard from the statue of Æsculapius, and on the left he is robbing the statue of Jupiter of its golden mantle and ornaments. Above the frieze on the top are Cupids riding on dolphins. The figures throughout are finely conceived, and the Italian influence is marked.

Another fine title-page of his designing was cut for Bugenhagen's *Interpretation of the Psalms*, published by Petri in March 1524, and afterwards used in Münster's *Cosmography*, and elsewhere, in which the principal subject is David dancing before the Ark;[2] and there are others of which the scope of this book does not permit any description.

Two important woodcuts, "Christ the True Light," and "The Sale of Indulgences" (Pl. 65),[3] from their oblong shape were probably intended to be placed at the head of some broadsheet written by a supporter of the Reformation. In these designs, in which Lützelburger's extraordinary skill in delicate and at the same time forcible use of the cutter's knife has rendered with the utmost fidelity the beauty of Holbein's line, the artist shows himself to have been in close sympathy with the new movement, in defence of which he brings to bear considerable powers of ridicule and satire. The rarity of these two prints is owing, no doubt, to the fact that the Basel Council maintained at that time a very severe censorship over all theological controversies, and strictly prohibited every publication or picture dealing with such debatable topics. These two woodcuts, therefore, attacking with merciless scorn the clergy, ecclesiastical abuses, and superstitions, would come under the ban of the Council, and, at the same time, every copy falling into the hands of the clerical party would be destroyed. Hence only three or four copies of each are known.

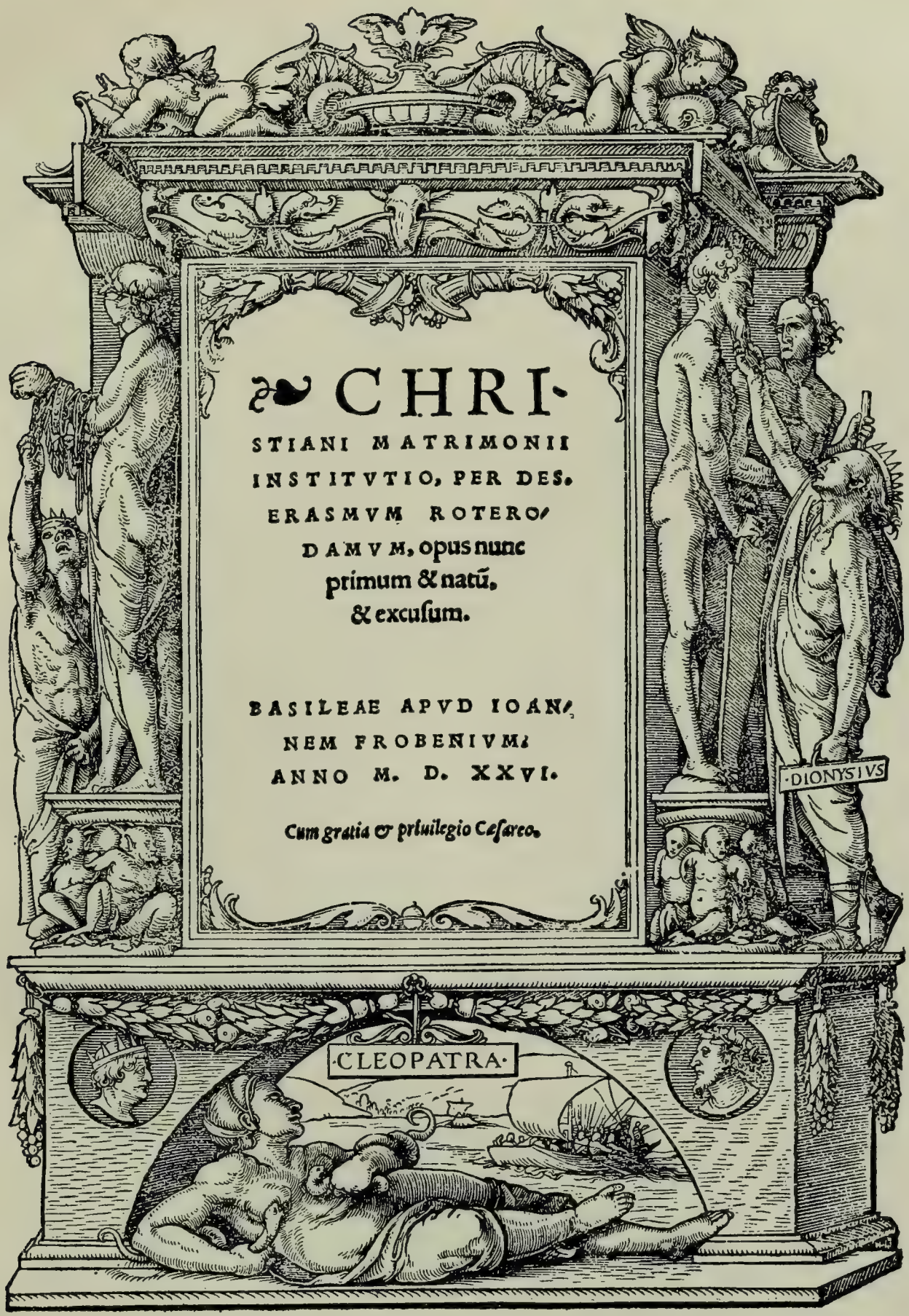
[1] Woltmann, 226.
[2] Woltmann, 212.
[3] Woltmann, 195, 196. Reproduced by Woltmann, i. pp. 237–38.

CHRI-

THE CLEOPATRA TITLE-PAGE

First used in 1523

From a copy of Erasmus' "Christiani Matrimonii Institutio" in the British Museum



CHRI-

STIANI MATRIMONII INSTITVTIO, PER DES. ERASMVM ROTERODAMVM, opus nunc primum & natũ, & excusum.

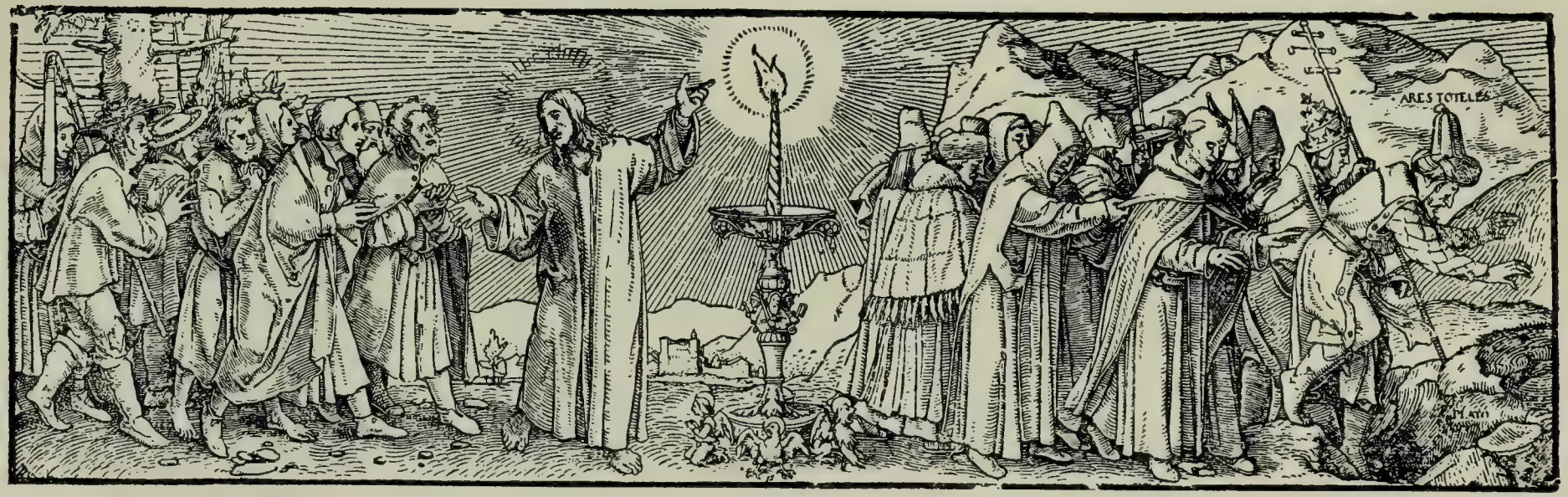
BASILEAE APVD IOANNEM FROBENIVM ANNO M. D. XXVI.

Cum gratia & priuilegio Cesareo.

1. CHRIST THE TRUE LIGHT

2. THE SALE OF INDULGENCES

From proofs in the British Museum


ARES TOTELES


MANASSES
OFFEN-SUNDER
K· DAVID·

The "Sale of Indulgences" is divided into two parts. On the right is shown the interior of a church, with the Pope enthroned, and surrounded by his cardinals. In the decorations of the building the arms of the Medici occur many times. Leo X is handing a letter of indulgence to a kneeling Dominican. In the choir-stalls on either side are seated a number of Church dignitaries. On the right, one of them rests his hand on the head of a kneeling youth and with a stick points to a large iron-bound chest for the money-offerings, into which a woman is putting her contribution. At a table on the left various Dominicans are preparing and selling indulgences. One of them repulses a beggar, who has nothing to give in exchange for the remission of his sins, while another is carefully checking the money which a suppliant is counting out on the table, and holding back the letter until the full amount has been received. The small figures are very lifelike, and the whole composition is a bitter satire upon the traffic of the Church. The left-hand half of the picture shows a landscape in which three true penitents are beseeching forgiveness from God the Father, who appears with outstretched arms in the clouds above them. Over the head of each figure is a label inscribed, "K. David," "Manasses," and "Offen-Synder," respectively. The first-named kneels, with his harp by his side on the ground; the others stand with clasped hands and bowed heads.

The second sheet, called in the Amerbach inventory "Christus vera lux, philosophi et papa in foveam cadentes," is divided into two halves by a magnificent candlestick which rises in the centre, the flame surmounted by a large halo of light. The stem contains sculptured figures of the four Evangelists, and the base is supported by their four symbols. On the left, Christ, a finely-conceived figure, points to the light with uplifted hand, and addresses a group of citizens, peasants, beggars, and other simple folk, who listen eagerly to his words. On the right, a procession of the clergy and learned men turn their backs upon the true light, and wander forth into the wilderness, led by Plato and Aristotle, the first of whom has stumbled into a deep pit, while the second is about to fall after him. They are followed by the Pope, a bishop, canons, and other churchmen, and monks of various orders, and a figure which appears to represent Erasmus. Behind them rise lofty snow mountains, while a distant city is seen across the plain in the centre, and trees on the left. This

woodcut bears witness to the rapidly growing change in the point of view of the Reformers, who were already parting company with their former allies, the humanists and scholars. Holbein in this design gives expression to the popular feeling of his day in Basel, which was beginning to regard classical learning with suspicion as a supporter of the theology to which it was opposed. This woodcut was used in 1527 to illustrate a large broadsheet, the " Evangelistical Calendar " of Dr. Johannes Copp.

Holbein's fertility of invention in this field was not confined to subjects chosen from the Bible or from classical literature. Numerous woodcuts occur in which he has made excellent use of incidents taken from the ordinary life of his day. There is a well-known border representing a group of peasants chasing a fox which has stolen a goose from the farmyard, an engraving on metal, which, in spite of the inferiority of the cutting, is full of humour and rapid movement.[1] The small figures, carrying flails, spades, and other hastily snatched-up weapons—among them a girl with a hayrake on her shoulder and a soldier with his spear—are running at full speed, while behind them an old man, leaning on a stick, stands among the remaining geese and shouts directions for the fox's capture. Another border shows a peasants' dance,[2] very similar in treatment to the same subject in the wall-painting of the House of the Dance. These two borders, with two side ones, representing children climbing trees, were frequently used by Cratander of Basel in books published between 1526 and 1534, and a second " Peasants' Dance " [3] is often found in Adam Petri's publications. Similar borders with dancing or playing children frequently occur. Most of them appear to have been cut in metal by Faber.

Both peasants and children were favourite themes with him in his designs for initial letters, which formed an important part of the decoration of the books issued from the Basel presses. He produced a number of complete alphabets, from A to Z, in which the little pictures which surrounded the letters formed a connected series of designs. Almost invariably the letter itself was shown in plain Roman type, placed within a small square, the background being filled in

[1] Woltmann, 231. Reproduced by Butsch, Pl. 64 ; Woltmann, i. p. 200.
[2] Woltmann, 232. Reproduced by Butsch, Pl. 64 ; Wornum, p. 13, &c.
[3] Woltmann, 233.

with small figures which have no actual connection with the letter, but are so combined with it as to produce a very decorative effect. One of the most beautiful of these alphabets, of which complete proof-sheets are to be found at Basel and Dresden, represents the merry-makings of a rustic fair,[1] and was used by both Froben and Cratander. The series opens with two musicians playing bagpipes, and the ten next letters represent dancing couples. In succeeding letters the peasants are represented making love, fighting, playing games and practical jokes, drinking, and other scenes in which the humour is too gross for modern tastes, and concluding with the return from the fair, the peasant riding home with his wife behind him, and the visit of the doctor on the following morning, made necessary by over-indulgence in merry-making. The cutting of the set is so beautiful that it must be from the hand of Lützelburger; no other engraver then working in Basel was capable of such minutely fine work, or could do such full justice to Holbein's genius for filling such small spaces with designs which appear so spacious and so large in style.

Another alphabet, which was evidently also cut by Lützelburger and used by Cratander, of which there is a proof-sheet at Basel, is devoted to the games of children.[2] They are represented dancing, playing music, tilting on hobby-horses, riding on one another's backs, hair-pulling, wrestling, and so on, while in one instance a small boy is chasing a cat with a bird in its mouth. Holbein was always very happy in his treatment of children, and in this instance, as in the Peasants' Alphabet, the delicacy of the execution is wonderful. There are three other alphabets dealing with children, and portions of others,[3] in one of which they are engaged in various trades and employments, and appear as carpenters, millers, masons, fishermen, bakers, painters, doctors, and so on. Another alphabet gives scenes from the Old Testament,[4] and a second consists of Greek initials.[5] Other letters, far too numerous to enumerate here, represent ornaments, flowers, animals, still life, love scenes, and soldiers. The most famous series of all, however, is the one known as the "Alphabet of Death," which is described in the next chapter.

[1] Woltmann, 253. Four of the letters reproduced by Woltmann, Eng. trans., p. 218.
[2] Woltmann, 254.
[3] Woltmann, 255–9.
[4] Woltman, 251.
[5] Woltmann, 266–8.

Holbein also designed a number of marks or devices for the various printers who employed him, which were used on the first and last pages of their publications. For Johann Bebelius he drew a palm-tree with a heavy weight pressing down the branches among which it is placed; in a second design for the same publisher a naked man is shown beneath this weight, who attempts with hands and feet to resist the pressure.[1] Cratander's trade-mark was Fortune or Opportunity, a naked goddess, with long flowing hair and winged feet, poised on a revolving ball, a broad-bladed knife in her hand. Valentine Curio's device was the Table of Parrhasius, a hand drawing [2] on a panel one straight line between two others, enclosed, like the mark of Cratander, within an ornamented shield. For Thomas Wolff [3] Holbein drew the figure of a scholar or publisher issuing from a doorway, his finger on his lips enjoining silence, with the inscription: "Digito compesce labellum." The devices of Matthias Bienenvater or Apiarius of Berne and Christopher Froschover of Zürich, contain punning allusions to their name. The former [4] represents a bear climbing a tree after honey, with the bees swarming round him; for the latter [5] Holbein made three different designs, each one containing frogs. In one the frogs are climbing a tree, with a beautiful landscape background of hills and peasants' houses, the whole within a Renaissance framework, and evidently cut by Lützelburger; in the two others a boy is represented riding on a large frog, one of them with a background representing the Lake of Zürich, with villages at the foot of the mountains, and the other with a hilly landscape with a castle on a height. Lastly, a very beautiful device made for Reinhold Wolfe [6] appears to have been produced during Holbein's last residence in England, though the cutting of the block was most probably done in Basel. It represents three boys flinging sticks into an apple-tree laden with fruit, and bears his motto "Charitas." [7] Wolfe, who was settled in London, was possibly some relation of Thomas Wolff, the Basel publisher, and so may have sent his book illustrations to Switzerland to be engraved. This particular device, in any case, is too finely cut to have been done in England at that period. Wolfe

[1] Woltmann, 238*a*, 238*b*. [2] Woltmann, 239–41. [3] Woltmann, 242, 243.
[4] Woltmann, 244, 245. [5] Woltmann, 246–8.
[6] Woltmann, 249. A number of these marks reproduced by Butsch, Pls. 50, 51.
[7] See Appendix (G).

was the publisher of John Leland's *Naeniæ*, which contained a woodcut portrait of Sir Thomas Wyat after Holbein,[1] and also of the same writer's poem on the birth of the Prince of Wales, which was not issued until 1543. On the back of the title-page of the last publication is the device of the Prince, "Ich Dien" under a crown of ostrich feathers, within a halo, which appears to be after a design by Holbein.[2] A few other woodcuts which date from the artist's last residence in England are referred to in a later chapter.[3]

[1] Woltmann, 209. [2] Woltmann, 205. [3] See Vol. ii. pp. 76–9.

CHAPTER X

THE "DANCE OF DEATH" AND OLD TESTAMENT WOODCUTS

The "Dance of Death" in literature and art—Early examples in Basel—Date of Holbein's "Dance of Death" woodcuts—Early proofs—Date of publication—Description of the first edition—Reasons for delay in publication—Description of the separate woodcuts—Holbein's "Alphabet of Death"—His illustrations to the Old Testament.

 OLBEIN'S fame as a designer of woodcuts, which had spread throughout Europe before the close of the sixteenth century, was due almost entirely to his celebrated "Dance of Death" pictures, and, in a lesser degree, to his Old Testament illustrations, both first published in 1538, though they were drawn, and for the greater part cut, between the years 1523 and 1526. They attained an immediate and widespread popularity, a popularity which has been a lasting one. Edition after edition followed in quick succession, and throughout the succeeding years down to the present day hardly a decade has passed without a fresh version being given to the world.

For centuries before the birth of Holbein the subject of Death in both pictorial and literary art was a favourite one throughout Europe, and more particularly among the German-speaking peoples, to whose imagination it made a strong appeal. Its representation both in painting and in literature was of common occurrence long before he made use of it, and by his genius rendered it immortal. The whole history of the subject is of great interest, and a voluminous literature has gathered round it, upon which it is not possible to touch in these pages. From the Middle Ages onwards these representations of the Dance of the Dead became common, and were painted on the walls of churches, the cloisters of convents, and castle halls. Well-known examples of such wall-paintings at one time existed in Paris, Blois, Berlin, Dresden, Lubeck, Strasburg, Basel, Berne, and other places,

while in England a famous one was painted on the north side of St. Paul's Cathedral during the reign of Henry VI. With the invention of printing, small versions of the pictures were issued in book form, and beneath them the old verses which accompanied the earlier wall-paintings, pointing out the terrors of death, and exhorting the wicked to repentance ere it was too late. In course of time the illustrations assumed greater importance, the number of the figures was increased, and the verses played only a secondary part.

More than one early wall-painting of the Dance existed in Basel in Holbein's day, and there can be little doubt that the constant sight of them stirred his imagination, and influenced his conception of the subject when he in his turn made use of it. The earliest in point of date was the one in the Klingenthal nunnery in Little Basel, which is said to have been dated 1312; but it is doubtful whether much of this wall-painting remained by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Only a few badly damaged portions were in existence in 1773, when it was rediscovered by Emanuel Büchel, a baker, who made coloured copies of what was left, which are now in the Basel Gallery. No traces of the original painting are now to be seen. The better-known Dance of the Dominican monastery in Great Basel in the suburb of St. John was of later date, executed probably towards the end of the fourteenth or early in the fifteenth century. According to tradition, for which there is no absolute proof, it was painted after the deliverance of Basel from the horrors of the terrible plague which raged there in 1439. It was copied or adapted from the older Klingenthal painting, closely following its arrangement of the various couples, but showing a great advance in artistic treatment, and in the variety and movements of the dancers. It consisted of about forty life-sized groups. In course of time it became so faded that in 1568 it was restored by Hans Hug Kluber, who made several additions to it; and it was again repaired in 1616, and in 1703. After that it was allowed to fall into a state of dilapidation, and in 1815 the wall of the cemetery of the monastery on which it was painted was pulled down by order of the Council, for the purpose of street improvements. A few remnants of it are still preserved in the Gallery, as well as coloured copies made by Emanuel Büchel in the same year as those he took from the Klingenthal painting. It is also well known from the

engravings made after it by Merian in the seventeenth century.[1] This wall-painting was formerly regarded in Basel as the work of Holbein, a legend which was a long time dying. The mistake, no doubt, originally arose through the wide celebrity attained by the artist's woodcut designs of the Dance, underneath which were printed verses taken from the older wall-paintings, so that the confusion between the two gradually grew, at first in Germany and elsewhere outside Switzerland, until in the end the error became established in Basel itself. At one time, too, the almost equally celebrated "Dance of Death" in the cemetery of the Dominican monastery in Berne, painted with the most biting satire by Niklaus Manuel, called Deutsch, was also attributed to Holbein. This wall-painting, which was finished before the year 1522, had completely perished by 1660, and the only records of it now remaining consist of a few drawings copied from it before its disappearance.

Holbein's designs for the "Dance of Death"[2] were all made, and nearly all the blocks were cut, before Lützelburger's death in the summer of 1526 and his own departure for England later in that year. This is not only proved by the evidence of the cuts themselves, which display a hand so masterly that it can only be that of Lützelburger, but also more directly from a series of copies of twenty-three of them preserved in the Berlin Museum. These are circular studies, about five inches in diameter, on brown paper, enlarged from the original blocks. They are somewhat coarse in execution, and appear to have been made for reproduction as glass-paintings. That they are not the original designs for the woodcuts, or taken from such designs, but were copied from the woodcuts themselves, is proved, first, by the fact that they are not reversed, as they would have been if based on the original drawings, and, secondly, that the one of "The Duchess" repeats the initials "H.L." on the bedpost with which Lützelburger signed his work. These copies, therefore, must have been executed after the actual cutting of the blocks; and as one of them ("The Emperor") is dated "1527," it gives a date before which both the woodcuts, and the designs for them, must have been prepared. The copies were taken, no doubt, from one or other

[1] See Woltmann, i. chap. xi.; Chatto, *Treatise on Wood Engraving*, ed. Bohn, chap. vi.; Douce, *Dance of Death*, 1858, pp. 30–37.

[2] Woltmann, 92–149.

of the several proof impressions which were printed off while the work of cutting was in progress, complete sets of which are in the British, Berlin, and Basel Museums, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and the Grand Ducal Cabinet at Karlsruhe, while less complete sets are to be found elsewhere. The Basel set is printed on four folio sheets, on one side of the paper only, with ten cuts on each page, and the title of each subject printed over it in German, in italic movable type, as in all but one of the other proof impressions known. These proofs include the whole of the subjects in the first printed edition of 1538, with the exception of the one of "The Astrologer," and they are of the greatest beauty and sharpness, and are printed in a fine black ink. The Bibliothèque Nationale also possesses a second but incomplete set of proofs, but among the subjects that of "The Astrologer" is included, which is missing in the other sets, which seems to indicate that it is a little later in date. This is the only copy extant, and, like the earlier ones, the set is printed on one side of the paper only, but has slight variations in the titles, which are printed in upright German Gothic characters instead of the more usual sloping Latin lettering.

Lützelburger's work upon the blocks was probably spread over several years. The "Alphabet of Death," which appears to have been undertaken before the "Dance," was first used in 1524, and Holbein's designs for both series must have been prepared during that year and the following one. This was the period of the Peasants' War, years of misery and bloodshed throughout Switzerland, and the state of feeling which it excited can be traced to some extent in these little pictures. This unsettled state of public affairs may have been the cause, otherwise almost inexplicable, of the long delay in the publication of the "Dance," which was not issued until twelve years after the engraver's death, and then not in Switzerland, but France. The acuteness of the religious controversy which divided Basel into two hostile factions, resulted, in 1524, in an edict of the Council forbidding the publication of all controversial matter; and although it is difficult to see much cause for controversy in the "Dance of Death," it is easy to understand that in those days of doubt and disturbance the Basel publishers may well have hesitated to produce anything which might be considered as coming, however indirectly, within the ban of the civic authorities. Otherwise it seems certain

that such a printer as Froben, or one of the other leading publishers, who knew so well the capabilities of both artist and engraver, would have been only too pleased to issue so fine a result of their united labours. Publication in Basel being debarred for the time, Lützelburger appears to have entered into negotiations with the Trechsels of Lyon, to whom, in the end, the blocks were transferred. The engraver was working for them at the time of his death, most probably on the " Dance " itself, one of the subjects of which, " The Waggoner," he left unfinished, and the Trechsels, as already explained,[1] were put to some trouble before they could obtain possession of it. Probably Holbein had nothing to do with this transaction. He seems to have received a commission from Lützelburger for the designs, and to have had no further interest in the venture.

It is equally difficult to explain the delay on the part of the Trechsels in publishing the book, unless for a similar reason—a belief that the times were inopportune for the issue of such a satire. The cuts were at length published in 1538 under the title of " Les Simulachres & Historiees Faces de la Mort, avtant elegammēt pourtraictes, que artificiellement imaginées" (The Images and Storied Aspects of Death as elegantly delineated, as ingeniously imagined). From this it will be seen that the popular title for the work, " The Dance of Death," by which it was already known by the end of the sixteenth century, is an incorrect one. The woodcuts were " Pictures of Death," and though the characters introduced are largely those of the earlier representations, Holbein has entirely abandoned the general motive of a dance of the living and the dead, which was the leading characteristic of the numerous wall-paintings. Instead, each sheet forms a separate dramatic scene, in which Death, in the guise of a skeleton, claims the living as his prey. In Basel, however, where the wall-painting of the Dominican monastery was one of the most familiar sights, and one in which the citizens took great pride, the title by which it was known, " The Dance of Death," was also popularly applied to the woodcuts shortly after their appearance, and the name has adhered to them ever since.

The first edition is in the form of a small quarto. On the title-page below the title is a printer's mark or emblem, which is not of Holbein's designing or Lützelburger's cutting, representing three heads

[1] See p. 190.

—of an old man, a youth, and a woman—joined together, two in profile, and the central one, that of the woman, full face, with a star on her forehead, and a wreath above. From the shoulders spring a pair of peacock's wings, the whole resting on a pedestal, on the top of which is an open book inscribed in Greek characters, " Gnothi Seauton," and at the foot a serpent and two chained globes, one surmounted by a small cross, and the other with two wings. This emblem has the further motto " Usus me Genuit." At the bottom of the page is printed, " A Lyon, Soubz lescu de Cologne, M.D.XXXVIII." At the end of the book, within an ornamental border, is the imprint: " Excvdebant Lvgdvni Melchior et Gaspar Trechsel Fratres. 1538." Next to the title-page comes a preface of six pages, which is followed by seven pages descriptive of " diverses tables de Mort, non painctes, mais extraictes de l'escripture saincte, colorées par Docteurs Ecclesiastiques, et umbragées par Philosophes." After these verbal sketches come the woodcuts themselves, forty-one in all, each one printed on a separate page, and, in place of the German titles of the various sets of early proofs, a text in Latin above the pictures, and beneath them a four-lined verse in French, written by Gilles Corrozet, containing moral reflections appropriate to the various subjects. The subjects themselves are not arranged in the same order as in the proof impressions, in which the clergy are separated from the laity, and the men from the women, beginning with the Pope and ending with the Little Child. In the Lyon edition the Emperor follows the Pope, and is in turn followed by the King, the Cardinal, the Empress, and so on. The pictures are succeeded by a series of descriptions of Death and reflections on mortality of a didactic character, under the title, " Figures de la Mort moralement descriptes, & depeinctes selon l'authorité de l'scripture & des sainctz Peres," the whole being brought to a conclusion with a discourse, " De la Necessite de la Mort qui ne laisse riens estre pardurable."

A passage in the French preface is of considerable interest, as it relates to the engraver of the woodcuts. This preface is dedicated " A moult reverende Abbesse de religieux Couuent S. Pierre de Lyon, Madame Jehanne de Touszele, Salut dun vray Zele." The convent of Saint Pierre les Nonnains, of which Madame Jehanne was abbess, was a religious house of long standing, among its inmates being many noble and wealthy ladies. The author of this preface, who only

signs it with his motto, "D'un vray zelle," was Jean de Vauzelles, Pastor of St. Romain and Prior of Montrottier, poet and scholar, one of three famous brothers who took a leading part in the literary life of Lyon. The passage referred to may be translated as follows: "But to return to our figured representations of Death, we have greatly to regret the death of him who has imagined (*imaginé*) such elegant figures as are herein contained, as much excelling all those heretofore printed (*patronées*) as the pictures of Apelles or of Zeuxis surpass those of modern times; for his funereal histories, with their gravely versified descriptions, excite such admiration in beholders, that the figures of Death appear to them most lifelike, while those of the living are the very pictures of mortality. It therefore seems to me that Death, fearing that this excellent painter (*painctre*) would paint him in a manner so lively, that he should be no longer feared as Death, and apprehensive that the artist would thus become immortal, determined to shorten his days, and thus prevent him finishing other subjects which he had already drawn. Among these is one of a waggoner, knocked down and crushed under his broken waggon, the wheels and horses of which appear so frightfully shattered and maimed that it is as fearful to see their overthrow as it is amusing to behold the liquorishness of a figure of Death, who is perceived roguishly sucking the wine out of a broken cask, by means of a reed. To such imperfect subjects, as to the inimitable heavenly bow named Iris, no one has ventured to put the last hand, on account of the bold drawing, perspectives, and shadows contained in this inimitable chef d'œuvre, there so gracefully delineated, that from it we may derive a pleasing sadness and a melancholy pleasure, as in a thing mournfully delightful." [1]

This passage is rather confusing, and at one time was supposed to refer to the designer, and not to the engraver of the woodcuts, and that Holbein, therefore, who was alive in 1538, could not have been the author of the designs. Now, however, that more modern research has proved that Lützelburger died in the summer of 1526, leaving several blocks which had been commissioned by the Trechsels unfinished, it becomes clear that Vauzelles, in his preface, is praising the woodcutter, and not the artist. It is true that the word "painctre" is used in one place, and that the term "imaginé" has

[1] Chatto, *A Treatise on Wood Engraving*, ed. 1861, pp. 330–1.

been taken in the modern sense by earlier writers, whereas it is from the Latin " imaginatus " which has the same meaning as " sculptus." In old French " ymaginier " is the same as " tailleur d'images," just as " sculptor " was the common Latin expression for a stone-cutter or engraver. There is the possibility that Vauzelles was ignorant of Holbein's share in the work, and imagined that both the designing and cutting of the blocks were the work of one man ; but this is not very probable, for in the same year the Trechsels published the Old Testament woodcuts, also engraved by Lützelburger, in a second edition of which, issued in the following year, 1539, Holbein's name as the designer is expressly mentioned in Nicolas Bourbon's Latin verses which were added to the volume. Bourbon was in Lyon at the time, and in a new edition of his *Nugæ*, published shortly afterwards, he included a Latin epigram, not given in the first edition of 1533, headed, " De morte picta à Hanso pictore nobili," which undoubtedly refers to Holbein as the painter or deviser of the " Dance of Death." Taking these facts into consideration, it does not seem probable that Vauzelles would have been ignorant of Holbein's connection with the work. In any case, the publishers must almost certainly have known it, and it may be conjectured that Bourbon's verses were written expressly to accompany the " Dance," just as his other lines were written for the Old Testament woodcuts, but that for some reason they were not used for that purpose.

Woltmann's contention that Holbein's name was purposely suppressed on account of the satirical character of the pictures, and that the preface was written with the intent to mystify, may be the correct solution. Holbein's interest, he says,[1] like that of the publisher, rendered it desirable that they should appear anonymously. In Lyon every movement towards the Reformation was zealously opposed by the bishop and the authorities, and the bloody edict against heretics issued by Francis I was put in force. Many of these pictures of Death, especially sheets such as the Pope or the Nun, might have given offence to the strict Catholic party. This would possibly have been all the more serious, had the book appeared with the name of Holbein, who was at that time residing at the court of the Protestant King of England, and was a citizen of Basel, in Switzerland, from whence the new doctrines emanated.

[1] See Woltmann, i. 269.

These arguments, however, as far as the suppression of Holbein's name is concerned, seem a little far-fetched. If certain of the woodcuts were likely to give offence, it is difficult to see how such offence could be removed by merely withholding the artist's name. It is probable, as already pointed out, that Holbein had no personal interest in the publication either of the "Dance" or the Old Testament pictures, his active co-operation in the work having ceased twelve years or more earlier, when he had completed Lützelburger's commission for the designs; and under such circumstances it is not likely that the Trechsels would have consulted him as to the use of his name or otherwise. The most reasonable explanation seems to be that it was omitted from the preface through an oversight or some confusion on the part of Vauzelles as to the separate identities of the artist and engraver, which the publisher did not consider was important enough to rectify. If it was safe to issue the book, there was surely no need to indulge in mysteries as to its authorship.

The book had an almost instantaneous success, and new editions followed in the course of a few years. The second edition was issued in 1542 from the same address, but by the brothers Frellon—"A Lyon, A lescu de Coloigne, chez Jan et François Frellon, freres"—and it has been assumed that the new publishers had acquired the business of the Trechsels. The latter were Germans who had settled in Lyon, the father, Johann Trechsel, having started business there as a printer in 1487. The Frellons were equally well known in the town as publishers, and it is probable that they had become the proprietors of the rival establishment by 1538, and that the Trechsels were then only conducting the printing under their orders, for the preface to the Old Testament pictures, first published in that year, is signed by Franciscus "Frelläus," and subsequent editions of both publications bore the name of this firm. A third edition, in Latin, was published in the same year, 1542, with the title "Imagines de morte et epigrammata e Gallico idiomate in Latinum translata," &c. The fourth appeared in 1545, with the title, "Imagines Mortis," &c., in which Corrozet's French verses under the cuts were translated into Latin by George Œmmel or Æmilius, Luther's brother-in-law. The only addition to the illustrations was a cut representing a lame beggar, introduced as a tail-piece to one of the discourses on death at the end of the book, but so poorly engraved that it is difficult to trace

Holbein's hand in the design. A fifth edition was issued in the same year, 1545, also under the title "Imagines Mortis," in which eleven new cuts were added to those which had appeared in earlier editions, or twelve, counting the one of the "Lame Beggar." These new subjects were, "The Soldier," "The Gamblers," "The Drunkards," "The Fool," "The Robber," "The Blind Man," "The Waggoner," and four subjects with naked children, in one of which they are represented as hunters, in another they lead a horse upon which one of them is mounted, bearing a standard, while in a third they are engaged in carrying one of their comrades in triumph. These latter cuts have no real connection with the subject-matter of the book, although French verses and Latin texts were added to them in an endeavour to find one, however far-fetched, but the designs are undoubtedly Holbein's, and must have been drawn by him on the blocks and cut by Lützelburger. It may be conjectured that after the engraver's death they were sent to Lyon with other unfinished blocks which the Trechsels had ordered from him. Three more editions were issued in 1547, the third of them with the title, "Les Images de la Mort," and the original French verses of the first edition; and in 1549 a version was published with Italian title and text. In the preface to the latter, Jehan Frellon, who was the sole publisher from 1547 onwards, makes complaint of a pirated edition which had been printed in Venice two years previously.

Further editions followed in 1554 and 1562, the number of illustrations in the last-named being increased to fifty-eight by the addition of five new cuts, thus making seventeen more pictures than had appeared in the original edition of 1538. Two of these fresh illustrations, "The Bridegroom" and "The Bride," rightly belong to the series, and though they made their first appearance nineteen years after Holbein's death, were undoubtedly drawn by him, and in all probability at the same time as the other designs of the series, between 1523 and 1526. The remaining additions consist of three more subjects with children, which again have every appearance of the same authorship. In one of these they appear as Bacchanalians, in another as musicians, and in the third they are carrying a suit of Roman armour.

It is needless to enumerate the many editions which followed these earlier ones. Inferior copies and pirated editions, in which much of

the beauty of the original woodcuts was lost, were numerous, and appeared in many parts of Europe. The earliest copy was apparently the small folio, entitled "Todtentantz," printed at Augsburg in 1544, and published by Jost de Negker.[1] In the following year appeared the pirated Venetian copy. Five editions of a third version, with fifty-three cuts, were published in Cologne between 1555 and 1573, while another copy appeared at Wittemberg in 1590. Of the copper-plate engravings copied from them the most important were the set of thirty etched by Wenceslaus Hollar between 1647 and 1651, which appear to be based not on one of the original Lyon editions, but on the copy produced at Cologne. Forty-six of the subjects were etched by David Deuchar in 1788, but these are of very inferior workmanship, and mere caricatures of Holbein's designs. In 1789 a free copy was cut by John Bewick, the younger brother of the more famous Thomas, and published under the title of "Emblems of Mortality." Turning to more recent days, they were reproduced upon stone in 1832 with great care by Joseph Schlotthauer, Professor in the Academy of Fine Arts at Munich; and these were re-issued in England by John Russell Smith in 1849. The best modern wood-engravings after them are those cut by Bonner and John Byfield for Douce's "Holbein's Dance of Death" in 1833. The "Dance" has also been rendered in photo-lithography for an edition issued by H. Noel Humphreys in 1868, and for the Holbein Society in 1879. In 1886 Dr. F. Lippmann edited for Mr. Quaritch a set of reproductions of the engraver's proofs in the Berlin Museum; and the *editio princeps* has been facsimiled by one of the modern processes for Hirth of Munich, as vol. x. of the Liebhaber-Bibliothek, 1884.[2]

These woodcuts are among the finest manifestations of Holbein's art. Small as they are, they have a largeness of design, a dramatic force and fertility of invention, and a brilliance of draughtsmanship which place them not only among the greatest achievements of the

[1] See Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts*, &c., vol. ii. p. 207. The cut of "The Duchess" has the date 1542, and that of "The Advocate" the engraver's monogram, HVE, from which it appears that Jost de Negker did not cut the blocks himself, but was only the publisher.

[2] See introductory note by Austin Dobson to the edition published by George Bell & Sons, 1898. The whole set reproduced by Mantz, pp. 83–87; and by Davies, pp. 196–200, from the proofs in the British Museum; and in Heinemann's "Great Engravers" Series, *Holbein*, ed. A. M. Hind, 1912, which includes the cuts of the 1562 edition.

artist, but of the century in which he worked. Each little picture tells its tale and points its moral with the utmost clearness, and the interest never flags throughout the series, although each one is merely a variation on a single theme. Detail there is in plenty, but it does not confuse the main action of the play, but rather helps to make the meaning which underlies it still clearer. There is nowhere a line too much or too little. The space to be filled is so small that these details are minute, yet Holbein's line is so broad, and his hand so unerring, that nothing is confused or meaningless. The spacing of each cut is masterly, so that they produce the effect of a great design set forth on some spacious canvas. Few as the touches of the pencil may be, they are sufficient to give each small figure its own individual appearance and character, as though it were an actual portrait studied from the life, while the action is natural and unexaggerated, and well expresses the particular emotion called forth in each separate case by the sudden and unexpected appearance of Death.

Death is represented throughout the series as a skeleton, occasionally with scanty, tattered garments, and wearing the most characteristic portions of the dress of the particular mortal he is about to snatch from the world of the living. Thus, in the woodcut of the Pope, Death wears a cardinal's hat ; in the Abbot he has a mitre on his head, and carries a crosier across his shoulder ; and in the Knight he is dressed in chain mail. In two of the pictures, the Empress and the Nun, Death is represented as a woman, and in several there are two skeletons who seize or attend the victim. In his representation of them Holbein displays little anatomical knowledge, but in spite of this the dead bones live, and in their movements, their expression, and their suggestion of the grim horror of death, produce an effect of vivid reality, which could not be bettered even though he had thought fit to give them greater scientific accuracy. In almost every case Death greets his prey with a mocking, ironical grin, and in most instances, too, he comes quietly, his presence unnoticed by those about to fall into his clutches ; and with natural, unexaggerated movements and actions he assumes the principal part in the drama. In a few instances, however, he makes known his presence in a more aggressive manner, and seizes his victims with such violence that they cry aloud in terror or rage, and struggle to break away from his merciless grip. The victims whom he treats in this

fashion are those who have themselves led violent lives. His action, in short, is always appropriate to the character and worldly position of those whose days he is about to cut short. He comes always as a mocker, and the prevailing note of the whole series is one of irony.

The first four cuts form, as it were, a preface to the actual "Dance of Death" which follows. The first of all represents the Creation. The Almighty bends over Adam, who lies asleep on a small island amid the waters, and draws Eve from his side. Then comes one of Adam and Eve in Paradise. The serpent, with human head, is twined round the branches of the tree, beneath which Adam is reaching up to pluck the fruit, while Eve is seated below, leaning against a rock. All around them, as in the first sheet, are animals—a stag, a sheep, a goat, a dog, a monkey, a rabbit, a hedgehog, a lizard, and so on—while in the branches of the beautifully drawn tree are a number of birds. The third cut represents the Explusion from Paradise, with the angel with the flaming sword flying in a cloud over the heads of the guilty couple. In this cut Death makes his first appearance. Playing upon his viol, he leads the way, dancing as he goes. This is one of the few instances throughout the set in which Holbein has so represented Death; in most of the illustrations he does not follow at all closely the earlier wall-paintings, in which the living and the dead are shown dancing together. In the next scene Adam is at work clearing the rough ground, with Death at his side helping him to uproot a tree, and Eve seated, half naked, in the background, suckling her child, her distaff held across one arm. This is followed by a design headed in the proof impressions "Gebeyn aller Menschen" (Bones of all Men), a crowd of skeletons in front of a charnel-house, with drums, trumpets, and other musical instruments, as though forming the orchestra which is to provide the music for the play which is about to follow. Some wear fantastic head-dresses, and their winding-sheets still hang around them in tatters.

The Dance opens with the Pope upon his throne, whom Death seizes as he is about to place the crown upon the head of a king who kneels to kiss his foot. Round him stand high dignitaries of the Church, among whom is a second figure of Death, a mocking figure, wearing a cardinal's hat surmounted with a cross, and holding another cross aloft. In the curtain over the throne lurks a small devil or demon, and a second, holding a bull with five seals, flies over the heads

of the ecclesiastics. In this the satire is so bold that it was altered in some of the later editions of the book. The Emperor (Pl. 66 (1)), too, sits on his throne, underneath a baldachin supported by Renaissance pillars, the Golden Fleece across his shoulders, the sword of justice in his hand, and the orb on a cushion at his feet. He is surrounded by his counsellors, and on the right a poor man kneels demanding justice. The Emperor, who bears a recognisable likeness to Maximilian, turns from him with frowning face towards the rich oppressor, who attempts, with little success, to excuse himself. Death has sprung upon the throne behind the monarch, and is about to tear the imperial crown from his head. On the ground is the hour-glass, with the sand almost run out, which is introduced into nearly all the pictures. The King (Pl. 66 (2)), who sits at table within an open loggia, is evidently intended to represent Francis I. The face, small as it is, has a strong resemblance to his portraits, and the curtain behind his chair is patterned with the lilies of France. The table is crowded with dishes, among which stands the hour-glass. Death mingles with the serving-men, and pours wine from a jug into a bowl for the King to drink. Between the pillars of the room can be seen the houses of the city. The Cardinal (Pl. 66 (3)), a distinguished figure, sits among the vine-trees, and, just as he presents a letter of indulgence to a kneeling man, Death, a grisly figure with long wisps of hair hanging from skull and chin, tears his hat from his head. Next comes the Empress (Pl. 66 (4)), walking in the garden in front of her palace, with her ladies of honour around her, one of whom bears her train. Death, disguised as one of her women attendants, leads her by the arm to the brink of an open grave, of which she and those with her are quite unconscious. She is followed by the Queen, whom Death, in the motley of a court jester, seizes by one hand, and drags away, while in the other he holds his hour-glass aloft. She shrieks aloud in terror, while the cavalier who accompanies her attempts to set her free, and her maid-of-honour flings up her arms in despair. The scene takes place in front of a Renaissance loggia, with open country and a village in the distance.

The woodcut of the Bishop is one of the most beautiful of the designs. Death takes the arm of the aged prelate and gently leads him away. It illustrates the text: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Behind the two chief actors the sheep and their distracted shepherds are seen wandering

in all directions. The background is a very picturesque landscape with high mountains, on one of which rises a castle, and the western sun, filling the sky with light, is just sinking behind their crests. Next comes the Duke with his retinue, of whom a poor woman with her child begs alms, and as he turns his head away in refusal, Death, crowned with a wreath of vine-leaves, reaches forward as though to pluck his ermine cape from his shoulders. Underneath a tree, in the branches of which is placed the hour-glass, the same grim skeleton, with mitre on head and crozier on shoulder, seizes the fat Abbot by the robes, and pulls him after him, his victim vainly protesting, and striving to hurl his breviary at his attacker's head. In similar fashion he drags along the Abbess by her scapulary from the convent gateway with its little belfry. She cries aloud in her terror, clutching her beads in her clasped and trembling hands, while the porteress joins in her lamentations, raising her arms to heaven. The Nobleman shows less fear when his time comes. He flourishes his long sword over his head, and attempts at the same time to push away Death, who drags him towards a bier on the ground with the hour-glass resting upon it In striking contrast to the violence of this scene is the following one of the Canon or Prebendary, who is entering a church, attended by his falconer, his jester, and his page. Death, wearing a hood, walks quietly by his side, holding his hour-glass in front of him, as though to show the worldly churchman, whose face is not visible, that the sands have nearly run out. The unjust Judge stretches out his hand to receive a bribe from the rich man, while the poor petitioner on the other side is ignored; but Death, unnoticed, stands on a ledge behind his chair and breaks in two the Judge's staff. The next picture harps upon the same theme. The Advocate (Pl. 66 (5)) is receiving his fee from a wealthy citizen whom he has helped in despoiling a poor man, who stands with clasped hands in the background. Death thrusts himself between them, hour-glass held aloft, and drops into the Advocate's open hand a few gold coins. The action takes place in a street of gabled houses and cobbled pavements, a transcript of a corner of Basel of Holbein's own day. The Counsellor (Pl. 66 (6)), in his furred gown and cap, is also shown in the street, deep in consultation with a nobleman, and oblivious to the entreaties of a man clad in rags, who, hat in hand, touches him on the shoulder to attract his attention. Perched upon the Advocate's back, a little

1. THE EMPEROR

2. THE ADVOCATE

3. THE KING

4. THE EMPRESS

5. THE PRIEST

6. THE CONFESSOR

7. THE LOVERS

8. THE CYNIC

9. THE DEVIL

THE DANCE OF DEATH WOODCUTS

1. THE EMPEROR
2. THE KING
3. THE CARDINAL
4. THE EMPRESS
5. THE ADVOCATE
6. THE COUNSELLOR
7. THE PREACHER
8. THE PRIEST

From proofs in the British Museum



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

winged devil with curly tail blows into his ear with a small pair of bellows; while Death, as a sexton, lies at his feet, with spade and hour-glass, ready to trip him up.

One of the most beautiful designs of the series shows the Preacher (Pl. 66 (7)) in his pulpit, expounding a false doctrine which he believes to be the true one, his hands held forth in exhortation. Behind him stands the other preacher, Death, wearing a stole, and with a jaw-bone upraised over the unheeding victim's head as though about to strike him down. The members of his congregation, some standing, some seated on low stools, gaze upwards with close attention, except one who has fallen asleep with his head against the pulpit base. Both the preacher and several of his listeners, especially the woman seated in the front on the right, are very expressive figures, and are drawn with masterly precision. Next comes the Priest (Pl. 66 (8)), one of the few of Death's victims whom Holbein has depicted without a touch of irony or satire. He passes along the street in his robes, bearing the sacrament to the bedside of some dying man, preceded by Death, who acts as his sacristan, with bell and lantern, his hour-glass tucked under his arm. Very different is Death's treatment of the Mendicant Friar, whom he seizes roughly by the hood, just as he is about to enter his monastery with well-filled box and begging-bag. There is bitter satire, too, in the picture of the Nun, kneeling in front of the altar in her cell, but her head turned behind her towards the young gallant who sits on the edge of her bed and plays his lute. Behind them Death, in the guise of an old hag, stretches forth a hand to extinguish the altar candles. Two skeletons accompany the Old Woman, who totters along a rough road by the aid of a stick, telling her rosary as she goes. One of them dances in front, playing with two sticks a musical instrument slung from his shoulders, while the other, crowned with a wreath, and a malicious grin upon his fleshless face, takes her by the arm, and dances by her side.

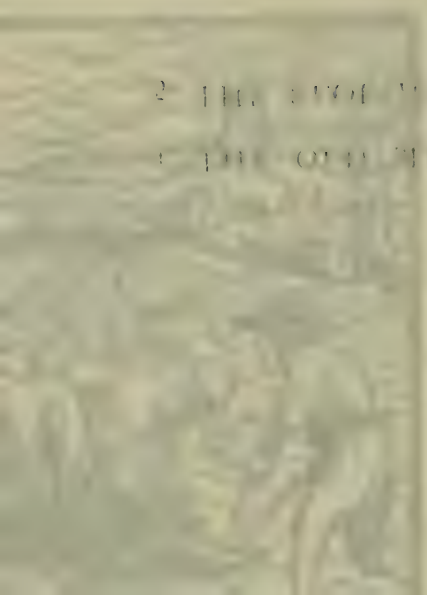
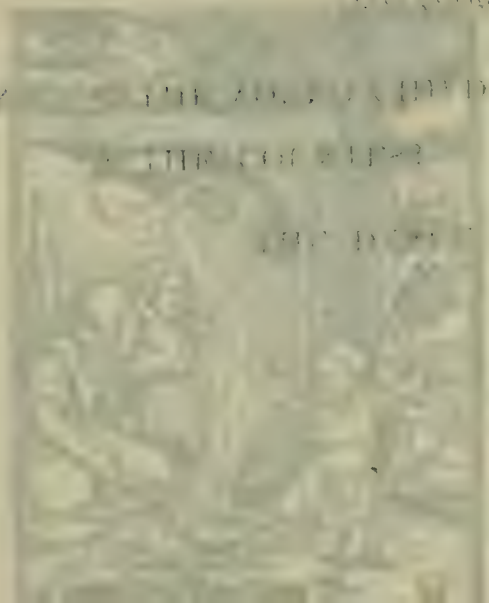
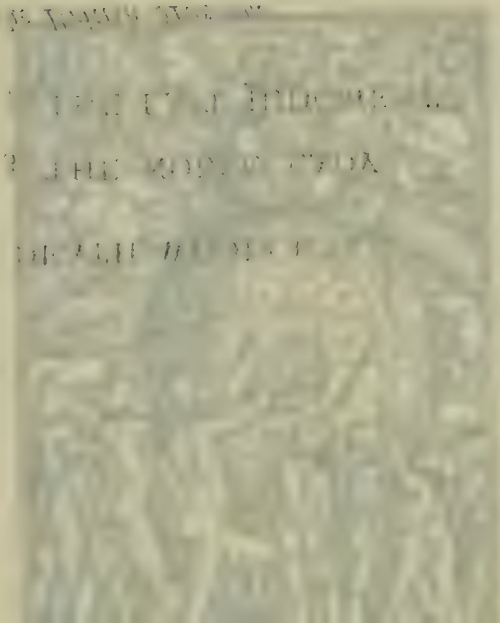
To the Physician in his chamber Death leads an old man broken down in health, and at the same time warns him that his hour, too, has come. A dog is curled up asleep in the foreground, and over the Physician's head is a shelf with books and glass water-bottles as in Holbein's portrait of Erasmus in Longford Castle. The setting of the Astrologer is one of the most effective and elaborate of the series. His chair and the circular table, covered with books and

mathematical instruments, at which he sits, are richly carved and ornamented. He is gazing at a celestial globe which hangs over his head, while Death strives to attract his attention by holding a skull for his inspection. The Rich Man, in a gloomy chamber with a window with heavy double bars, sits surrounded by his money-chests and bags, a heap of gold spread before him on the table. He springs up in a fury of anger at the sight of Death, perched on a stool and filling a large bowl with money from the heap. It is as bitter to him to lose his wealth as his life. Equally furious is the feeling displayed by the Merchant, upon whom Death pounces, seizing him by both hair and cloak, at the moment when he is examining and checking his bales and barrels of merchandise which have just been unshipped on the quay. A companion, a bearded man, cries out in fear, with uplifted hands. Behind them the masts and spars of the ships in the harbour stand out against the sky. Terror, too, is the keynote of the Mariner. The storm is raging violently, the wind howls, and the waves dash over the ship. The greater part of the sail has blown away, and the sailors have abandoned all hope, and wring their hands in terror, as Death clambers over the side and snaps the mast in two.

Some of the finest designs are to be found among the remaining woodcuts. Death, clad in chain mail, runs a lance through the body of the Knight, a man in full armour, with huge plumes in his helmet, who gives a last despairing cry and attempts to strike down his enemy with his sword. A low-lying landscape stretches out in the distance, lit up by the rays of the fast-sinking sun. The Count has little of the Knight's bravery. He clasps his hands in terror as Death, disguised as a peasant, with his flail flung on the ground, prepares to strike him down with his own heraldic escutcheon. On the other hand, the Old Man (Pl. 67 (1)), bent with the weight of years, tottering down his garden with the help of a thick stick, finds in Death nothing but a kindly companion, who leads him gently by the hand to the edge of a deep grave dug in the turf, while with the other hand he plays a dulcimer. The Countess (Pl. 67 (2)) in her chamber, to whom her maid is handing a sumptuous dress, is helped in her toilet by Death, who fixes round her shoulders a necklace of dead men's bones. The Nobleman's Wife (Pl. 67 (3)) walks along hand in hand with her husband, who gazes on her with affection, oblivious to all else, while a grinning skeleton precedes them, beating vigorously on his drum. The woodcut of the Duchess






THE DANCE OF DEATH WOODCUTS

1. THE OLD MAN
2. THE COUNTESS
3. THE NOBLE LADY
4. THE DUCHESS
5. THE PLOUGHMAN
6. THE YOUNG CHILD
7. THE LAST JUDGMENT
8. THE ARMS OF DEATH

From proofs in the British Museum



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

(Pl. 67 (4)) is the one which Lützelburger has signed with his initials in an escutcheon on the foot of the bedpost. The lady, fully dressed, springs up from her sleep in fright, as Death at the end of the bed tears the coverlet from her. A second skeleton plays the fiddle, while her greyhound crouches terrified on the floor. Death is also accompanied by a music-making comrade when he encounters the Pedlar with his heavily-laden pack on his back, and clutches him by the sleeve.

Once again he comes in the guise of a friend to the old and weary Ploughman (Pl. 67 (5)), in rags and barefooted, his hair straggling through his broken hat. Death helps him in ploughing the last furrow, and flogs forward the worn-out team of thin and miserable horses. At the end of the field with its long ploughed lines a delightful landscape lies stretched, with the houses of a village nestling among the trees, the church tower rising from the hillside on one of the lower spurs of the Swiss mountains, the whole peaceful scene flooded with the light of the setting sun. This background is, perhaps, the most beautiful of all, and yet its lovely effect is produced with the simplest means. The long list of Death's victims concludes with the Young Child (Pl. 67 (6)), whom he leads by the hand through the doorway of a miserable, half-ruined cottage, with broken roof open to all weathers. The child turns back in terror, its free hand stretched towards its mother, who kneels stirring the pot on the scanty fire, the smoke of which half fills the room. Both she and an older child gaze after the little one with mouth wide open in astonishment and fear, and hands uplifted to head. The original series concludes with two cuts, one representing the Last Judgment (Pl. 67 (7)), with Christ enthroned on the rainbow over the celestial globe, with the saints around him, and down below a crowd of men and women newly risen from the grave ; and the other showing the Arms of Death (Pl. 67 (8)), which recalls, in its arrangement, more than one of Holbein's designs for painted glass. The shield, on which is placed a skull, with a worm hanging from its jaws, is shattered and torn in places, as though fashioned from a great bone which has mouldered in the grave. A tattered winding-sheet is draped round it, and it is surmounted by a helmet with an hour-glass for a crest, from the base of which two skeleton arms grasping a large stone are raised aloft. The supporters are a man and woman in the rich costume of Holbein's day, each of whom rests a hand on the

escutcheon, the latter gazing down at it, while the former points to the skeleton arms and looks towards the spectator as though to urge him to remember that death is the end of all things. In the background rise the peaks of the Alps beneath a cloudy sky. Dr. Woltmann saw in these two figures likenesses of Holbein and his wife, but they evidently represent personages in a higher sphere of life.

The eight additional subjects which were included in the edition of 1545 were, with possibly one exception, designed by Holbein, and it seems almost certain that the cutting of most, if not all, of the blocks had been begun by Lützelburger, and that they were sent to Lyon after his death in 1526, as part of the commission he had received from the Trechsels. The first of them represents the Soldier, who is attacking Death with his two-handed sword. The latter is armed with a great bone and a circular shield. The ground beneath them is strewn with the dead and dying, and over the hills in the background comes rushing a body of soldiers, with a second skeleton beating a drum as he leads the charge. Next we have the Gamester, seated at table with two comrades. Death clutches him by the throat, and a devil seizes him by the hair. One of the party is counting his gains, and cards are strewn over the floor. This is followed by the Drunkard, a scene with men and women in the middle of a disorderly carouse, among whom Death stalks, and, pulling back the head of one of them, a gross and bloated old man, pours wine down his throat from a tankard. The Fool dances over the rough ground, one finger in his mouth, and a long bladder grasped in the other hand, as though about to strike at Death, who, falling into his humour, dances by his side to the music of the bagpipes he is playing. The Robber, hidden in the recesses of a wood, is springing from behind the trees in order to snatch the market-basket from the head of a barefooted woman who passes by as night is falling, but Death has him by the neck before he can accomplish his purpose. In the next scene he is leading the Blind Man by his stick towards the water into which the next step or two will plunge him; and then comes the Waggoner, the woodcut which in the preface is mentioned by name as the one which the engraver left unfinished. Vauzelles' description of it is not in complete accord with the finished block. The driver is not crushed beneath his waggon, but stands with hands clasped over his head, and a look of mingled fear and consternation on his face. The

horse within the shafts has fallen on the side of a steep hill, and the cart with its great barrels is overturned. Death springs up behind, and untwists the stick by which the cord which fastens the barrel is kept taut. A second skeleton carries away one of the waggon wheels, which has been broken off. The concluding design shows the Beggar, lame and blind, and almost nude, seated among the straw and rubbish in front of some rich man's house, his hands raised as though imploring Death to come for him ; but he is the only one from whom Death keeps aloof. This block, as already noted, is so badly cut that it is not easy to say with certainty whether Holbein was the designer of it. In the " Young Wife " of the 1562 edition, Death is dancing as he leads her away in tears, while they are preceded by a gaily dressed gallant who plays a guitar. In the companion cut, Death also dances, and blows a trumpet, as he drags off the " Young Husband " by the corner of his cloak. In the background is a ruined building.

It would be difficult to find a happier partnership than that which existed between the designer and the engraver of this great Dance. Lützelburger has reproduced Holbein's dramatic story with the utmost sympathy and understanding, and from a technical point of view the cutting comes as near perfection as possible. Holbein's delicate and expressive line is retained almost unimpaired, and there is no pretentious elaboration of detail merely to show the skill of the wood-cutter. With the simplest methods—with sparing use of cross-hatching for the indication of light and shade—methods best suited to the material used, the most beautiful results have been obtained, for which designer and engraver must share the praise. So admirably are these cuts executed, says Chatto, " with so much feeling and with so much knowledge of the capabilities of the art, that I do not think any wood-engraver of the present time is capable of surpassing them. The manner in which they are engraved is comparatively simple : there is no laboured and unnecessary cross-hatching where the same effect might be obtained by simpler means ; no display of fine work merely to show the artist's talent in cutting delicate lines. Every line is expressive ; and the end is always obtained by the simplest means. In this the talent and feeling of the engraver are chiefly displayed. He wastes not his time in mere mechanical execution—which in the present day is often mistaken for excellence ;—he

endeavours to give to each character its appropriate expression; and in this he appears to have succeeded better, considering the small size of the cuts, than any other wood-engraver, either of times past or present." [1]

In this great work "in little" Holbein's imagination found its fullest and most expressive play, and it is small wonder, therefore, that the Dance soon gained a wide popularity. Almost from the beginning it appears to have been well known as Holbein's work, and numerous references to it occur in contemporary literature. The learned Conrad Gesner, of Zürich, a younger contemporary of the artist, expressly ascribes it to him in his *Partitiones Theologicæ*, &c., published in 1549. The passage runs: "Imagines Mortis expressæ ab optimo pictore Johanne Holbein cum epigrammatibus Georgii Æmylii, excusæ Francofurti et Lugduni apud Frellonios, quorum editio plures habet picturas. Vidi etiam cum metris Gallicis et Germanicis, si bene memini." Van Mander, whose *Het Schilder Boek* was first published in 1604, includes the Dance among Holbein's works; and Joachim von Sandrart, in his Life of the artist, tells a charming story which indicates in how high an estimation Holbein's designs were held just one hundred years after he drew them on the wood. Sandrart, who was a pupil of Gerard Honthorst at Utrecht, says: "I remember that in the year 1627, when the celebrated Rubens was proceeding to Utrecht to visit Honthorst, I accompanied him as far as Amsterdam; and during our passage in the boat I looked into Holbein's little book of the *Dance of Death*, the cuts of which Rubens highly praised, recommending me, as I was a young man, to copy them, observing that he had copied them himself in his youth." Sandrart was then a young man of twenty, and was on his way to England with his master. "And after this," he adds, "Rubens held a beautiful and laudatory discourse almost the whole way upon Holbein, Dürer, and other old German painters." [2]

Holbein's Alphabet of Death (Pl. 68),[3] also engraved by Lützelburger, displays all the inventive power and dramatic feeling of the larger Dance. These diminutive inch-square letters show the engraver's

[1] Chatto, *Treatise*, &c., pp. 324–5.

[2] Chatto, *Treatise*, &c., p. 365; Woltmann, i. p. 240; Wornum, p. 25.

[3] Woltmann, 252. The set reproduced by Davies, p. 194; Knackfuss, fig. 71; and elsewhere. They are used as the initial letters in this book.

THE DANCE OF DEATH: ALPHABET

From proof in the Royal Print Cabinet, Dresden

THE DANCE OF DEATH ALPHABET

From proof in the Royal Print Cabinet, Dresden



wonderful delicacy of cutting, and his power of reproducing the artist's designs in almost their full beauty and force. Much of the space in each one of them is occupied by the plain Roman letter itself, behind which the subject is arranged, and Holbein has succeeded in placing his minute figures so ingeniously that the action is not concealed by the letters to an extent detrimental to the clearness of the story. Isolated examples of the use of these letters in printed books occur as early as 1524, the letter N appearing in the Greek New Testament issued by Bebelius in that year, and a number of them are to be found in the publications of several Basel printers from 1525 onwards. This proves that the Alphabet was designed at about the same time, if not before, the Dance. The subjects of the twenty-four letters (J and U are not included) are, with few exceptions, the same as in the larger woodcuts, although in most cases they are treated differently. It is possible that Holbein, in drawing these letters on the blocks, became so fascinated with his theme, and delighted with the skill of his engraver, that he determined to carry it still further, and on a more important scale, in which the play of his poetic and ironic fancy could find even wider scope, without the hampering presence of the letters themselves. The backgrounds of the Alphabet are plain, but in the more than quadrupled space which the size of the Dance woodcuts permitted, he was able to add many details which helped to point his moral and tell his tale more vividly, and also those wonderful backgrounds, landscapes, street scenes, the interiors of palaces, offices, and hovels, which form so charming and characteristic a part of each little picture.

The smaller series begins, like the Dance, with the concourse of skeletons playing weird music for the dancers who follow, from the Pope in the letter B down to the Young Child in the letter Y. In certain instances, such as the Bishop (H), the Monk (O), the Soldier (P), the Fool (R), and the Gamblers (X), the action has a close resemblance to that in the cuts dealing with the same characters in the Dance, though differing in slight details. Thus the Fool in the Alphabet wears cap and bells, and Death, instead of dancing with him and playing the pipes, is seizing him violently by the shoulder. In a number of the letters two skeletons are shown, and they are occasionally aided by a small devil. The little child is torn from the cradle in the sight of its agonised mother, the Queen is

dragged away by a rope round her neck, the Nun is led off gently by the hand, with head downcast, and the Drunkard, prone on the ground, has his last draught poured roughly down his throat, while the second skeleton seizes him by the leg as though to pull him up. Three new subjects are introduced into the series: the Courtesan, whom Death, wearing the high hat of a gallant, closely embraces, while his companion crawls away on his hands and knees, the hour-glass balanced grotesquely on his back; the Hermit, who is led gently from his cell, and the Horseman, behind whose back Death has sprung. The letter Z contains a reproduction of the Last Judgment conceived in a similar fashion to the woodcut of the Dance. The inclusion in this Alphabet of the Fool, the Soldier, and the Gamblers, who appear for the first time in the 1545 edition of the Dance, after the death of both artist and engraver, and the similarity of the conception in both series, afford further proof that the new subjects added to the Dance seven years after it was first published were drawn by Holbein on the blocks, although portions of the cutting of them were probably the work of some other hand than Lützelburger's.

The third great work in which these two masters collaborated was the series of woodcut illustrations to the Old Testament,[1] first published, like the Dance of Death, at Lyon by the brothers Trechsel, and in the same year, 1538. The total number of these woodcuts is ninety-one, but the whole of them are not included in the earlier editions. The first issue (1538) contains eighty-eight of them, the rare "Fall" (1), "Nathan rebuking David" (40), and "Isaiah lamenting over Jerusalem" (72) being absent. In the second edition (1539) only the first of the series, "The Fall" is missing. In addition to these illustrations, the first four woodcuts of the "Dance of Death"—the Creation, the Temptation, the Expulsion, and Adam tilling the Ground—were borrowed from that publication, and placed at the beginning of the new one. The Bible cuts, which vary slightly in their dimensions, are of different form, being oblong and almost double the size of those of the Dance. They were issued as a small quarto picture-book, instead of being included, as was probably the artist's or the engraver's original intention, as illustrations to an edition of

[1] Woltmann, 1–91. The whole series reproduced by Mantz, pp. 92–108; and, with the exception of seven, by A. M. Hind, in *Holbein*, "Great Engravers" series, 1912; thirteen by Davies, p. 188.

the Bible. In the same year, however, as the first issue of the book, they were used for the latter purpose, the complete set of ninety-one appearing in a Latin edition of the Bible produced by another Lyon printer, Hugo a Porta, though with the imprint of the Trechsels. The title of the first edition is as follows: "Historiarum veteris Instrumenti Icones ad vivum expressæ. Una cum brevi sed quoad fieri potuit, dilucida earundem expositione. Lugduni, sub scuto Coloniensi. M.D.XXXVIII." The title-page contains an emblematic cut almost exactly similar to the one in the Dance, and with the same motto, "Usus me genuit." The imprint at the end is also the same, with the names of Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel, and the date. The address to the reader is signed "Franciscus Frellæus" in the first two editions, but in subsequent issues the surname was given as "Frellonius." This seems to indicate that the Frellons were already associated with the Trechsels in the business, of which they shortly afterwards obtained full control, the third edition (1543) of the Old Testament illustrations being published in their name, "apud Joannem et Franciscum Frellonios fratres," and from the same address, "sub scuto Coloniensi." Chatto[1] suggests that they were the actual publishers of the first editions of both the Bible cuts and the Dance, but for reasons of policy, connected with the satirical nature of the subject-matter of the designs, their names were withheld until the success of the two publications was assured. There is no mention of Holbein's name in the first edition, but a year later, in the second, the publisher's address is followed by a set of Latin verses by Holbein's friend, Nicolas Bourbon, the French poet, in which the artist's name, as the author of these designs, is coupled with Apelles, Zeuxis, and other famous painters of classical times, whom he is said in all ways to eclipse. Other verses in French were added, from the pen of Gilles Corrozet, which form more or less a rhyming paraphrase of Frellon's address, in which the reader is exhorted to avoid seductive paintings of Venus, Diana, Helen, Dido, and other ladies celebrated in fable and poetry, and to turn instead to those sacred pictures taken from the Holy Scriptures, from the study of which far greater profit is to be obtained. Corrozet, no doubt, was also responsible for the French explanatory verse which, together with the appropriate Latin text, accompanied each woodcut, just as he was the author of the

[1] Chatto, *Treatise*, &c., p. 366.

" descriptions severement rithmées " of the Dance of Death. There is no need to give a list of the later editions, which are almost as numerous as those of the Dance. An English edition was published in 1549, with the title—" The Images of the old Testament, lately expressed, set forthe in Ynglishe and Frenche with a playn and brief exposition. Printed at Lyons by Johin Frellon, the yere of our Lord God, 1549."

These illustrations were drawn on the blocks by Holbein at about the same date as the Dance of Death pictures. This is proved not only from the fact that a number of them were engraved by Lützelburger, and that in style and composition they closely resemble the " Todtentanz " and other Basel designs by Holbein before his departure for England in 1526, but also because copies of more than half of them are to be found in the Bible published by Froschover in Zürich in 1531, showing that at least proofs of them were well known among Swiss publishers long before they were issued in book-form in Lyon. There is a proof impression of the whole series in the Basel Gallery, on sheets printed only on one side, which was probably struck off immediately after the blocks were completed. It begins with the very rare " Fall," which otherwise only appears in Hugo a Porta's Bible of 1538, being missing in all editions in which the pictures appear alone, its place being taken in the latter by the four introductory sheets borrowed from the Dance of Death. The two other woodcuts already noted as missing from the first edition (Nos. 40 and 72), and absent, too, from the Latin Bible, are also to be found among the Basel proof impressions. In one instance, the " David and Uriah " (No. 39) there are two versions among these proofs, in one of which a background of wall, window, and curtain is introduced, but so badly engraved that it was evidently decided to abandon or alter the block in favour of the second version, in which the two figures are shown against a plain, white surface.

A large number of the illustrations were engraved by Lützelburger, but side by side with them are others which are the work of a far less skilful hand or hands. In one or two instances, such as the " Joel " (No. 86) and the " Zechariah " (No. 90), the workmanship is so rude that it is difficult to say with certainty that they are based on Holbein's own designs. Woltmann suggests that these woodcuts were originally commissioned by Adam Petri, with the intention of using

them to illustrate later editions of his German Old Testament, but that on account of the acute religious strife which then existed in Basel, it was thought advisable to hold them in reserve.[1] Even though Holbein's name had been withheld from these designs, as it was from the Dance of Death, his authorship of them would still remain undoubted, for in style and method they are in exact agreement with the Dance woodcuts, and certain of the figures recall the still earlier "Praise of Folly" drawings. The children in some of these Bible cuts, such as those who jeer at the Fool (No. 69, Psalm lii.), those among the captive Midianites (No. 26, Numbers xxxi.), and those mocking Elisha (No. 47, 2 Kings ii.), all delightfully sympathetic little figures, have the closest resemblance to the children in the Duke or Elector, and the Young Child woodcuts of the Dance. The same resemblances are to be seen between many of the other figures, some of which still retain that stumpiness which marked his delineation of the human form at that time, and in the minor details, such as the representation of smoke and water, of trees, and in the landscape backgrounds. In the cut of Esther kneeling before Ahasuerus (No. 65, Esther ii.), the curtain at the back of the King's throne is covered with fleurs-de-lis, as in the representation of the King in the other series, showing that when kingship was in question Holbein's thoughts turned to Francis I, as the most notable monarch of his day. Many other instances of resemblance can be easily perceived when a close comparison of the two sets of designs is made.

Regarded as illustrations to the books of the Old Testament, these woodcuts are in all ways admirable. Holbein has brought to their making less of that imaginative power and biting humour which characterise the marvellous little pictures of the great Dance. He has concentrated his skill rather upon the faithful and accurate telling of these sacred stories as they are given in the text itself, and he does this with a perfect understanding of their strong dramatic power and their equally strong human interest. They are historical rather than spiritual in their conception, filled with the actual spirit of the narrative itself, to the exclusion of all else. He is revealed in them as a teller of stories of the first rank, with the power of seizing the most dramatic moment of each incident he depicts with unfailing instinct, and then representing it with a few unerring strokes of his

[1] Woltmann, 1st ed., Eng. trans., p. 233.

pencil clearly and simply, with no over-elaboration of needless detail or overcrowding of characters. All that is absolutely necessary he gives, and no more ; but within these narrow limits, a space only of a few square inches, he produced a series of designs admirable in composition, dignified and noble in conception, and yet free and dramatic in action.[1]

It is impossible within the limits of this book to attempt even a short description of these illustrations. Among the finest are Abraham sacrificing Isaac (No. 5), Jacob blessing Ephraim and Manasseh (No. 9) (Pl. 69 (1)), Moses and the Burning Bush (No. 11), the Brazen Serpent (No. 25), the Submission of the Midianites (No. 26), Ruth and Boaz (No. 32) (Pl. 69 (2)), Hannah and Elkanah (No. 33), the Death of Jeroboam's Son (No. 45), Elisha and the Children (No. 47), David before the Ark (No. 53), Solomon blessing the Faithful (No. 55), the Blinding of Tobit (No. 61), Job (No. 62), Esther and Ahasuerus (No. 65), Judith with the Head of Holofernes (No. 67) (Pl. 69 (3)), Daniel in the Lion's Den (No. 84), Amos (No. 87) (Pl. 69 (4)), and Jonah under the Walls of Nineveh (No. 88). Considerable charm is added to a number of them by the beauty of the landscape or architectural background, put in with a few simple but masterly lines, as in the Burning Bush (No. 11), in which Moses kneels to unfasten his shoes, his sheep grazing round him ; in Moses receiving the Commandments (No. 21) (Pl. 70 (1)), with the people at work in the vineyards, and in the distance a harvest waggon passing along a road towards a village on the plain ; and in the walled city of Jerusalem with the Temple rising in its midst, in the Return from the Captivity (No. 58) (Pl. 70 (2)). Many others could be cited, as well as subjects containing dramatic battle scenes, recalling the masterly study of a fight of landsknechte in the Basel Gallery which has been described on a previous page.[2] This is particularly the case in the cut showing the Defeat of Sennacherib's Army (No. 57). Other animated battle scenes occur in David learning of the Death of Saul (No. 37), and David triumphing over the Philistines (No. 38).

[1] A considerable number of the subjects appear to have been suggested to Holbein by the small woodcuts in the Malermi Bible, published in Venice in 1490, which, in turn, had been more or less adapted from the Cologne Bible of 1480 ; but the material so used by Holbein was completely transformed by the magic of his pencil. See A. M. Hind, *Holbein*, in "Great Engravers" series, p. 10.

[2] See pp. 160–1.

1. ИСАК ВЕЛИТ ЕВРЕЯМ УЙТИ ИЗ ЕГИПТА

2. ЕВРЕИ УХОДЯТ ИЗ ЕГИПТА

3. ВОЛЯ ЧЕТВЕРТАЯ

4. ЧУМА ВТОРАЯ

5. ЧУМА ТРЕТЬЯ

6. ЧУМА ПЯТАЯ

OLD TESTAMENT WOODCUTS

1. JACOB BLESSING EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH

2. RUTH AND BOAZ

3. JUDITH WITH THE HEAD OF HOLOFERNES

4. AMOS PREACHING

From proofs in the British Museum



1



3



2



4

OLD TESTAMENT WOODCUTS

1. MOSES RECEIVING THE TABLES OF THE LAW

2. THE RETURN FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

From proofs in the British Museum

3. THE ANGEL SHOWING ST. JOHN THE NEW JERUSALEM

Revelation xxi.

Woodcut from Adam Petri's New Testament, 1523

From a copy in the British Museum



1



2



3

Holbein also went to the Old Testament for the subjects of an Alphabet of twenty-four letters, engraved on metal, and of considerable size.[1] They begin with the Creation of Eve, and conclude with Jacob's journey into Egypt. The letters N to Y are occupied with the story of Joseph, which is thus given in considerable detail. In the letter O, representing Joseph and Potiphar's wife, the bed on which the latter sits has curtains ornamented with the French lilies.

[1] Woltmann, 251.

CHAPTER XI

THE MEYER MADONNA AND THE DEPARTURE FOR ENGLAND

Commission from Jakob Meyer for the "Meyer Madonna"—Description of the picture at Darmstadt—Preliminary studies for the heads—The copy at Dresden—History of the two pictures—Magdalena Offenburg and the "Lais Corinthiaca" and "Venus"—Lack of work in Basel owing to the disturbed state of the city—Holbein's departure for England.



HE year 1526 was by no means a favourable one for the members of the Basel guild of painters, although, in all probability, it was in this very year that Holbein received one of his most important commissions, the famous altar-piece known as the "Meyer Madonna," now in the Grand-ducal palace of Darmstadt, in the possession of the Grand Duke of Hesse. At this period ecclesiastical dissension had reached its acutest pitch, and party feeling ran so high that there was little time or inclination among the leading citizens for the patronage or even the consideration of the fine arts. The Reformers, then in the ascendant in the control of public affairs, were strongly opposed to all forms of pictorial or decorative art for church use, and it was this side of the painter's craft which, until then, had been the most lucrative. Times, indeed, were so bad for them that in January of this year the Painters' Guild had been forced to petition the Council for permission to remain in Basel in the pursuit of their art in order that they might obtain means for the support of their families. Holbein, in spite of his outstanding merits and the high reputation he had made for himself in his adopted city, felt the pinch of adverse circumstances almost as severely as his brother painters. The authorities, unwilling, apparently, to complete the decorations of the Town Hall, had no remunerative work to give him. From November 1523, when he received the last instalment of his money for his wall-paintings in that building, down to the beginning of 1526 there is no record of any civic payment made to him. On the 3rd of March, however, in the latter year, he received the meagre sum of

two Basel pounds ten shillings, about equal to two gulden, for the painting of some shields or coats of arms for the borough of Waldenburg, a township on the slopes of the Jura within the jurisdiction of Basel, no doubt for the decoration of the court of justice or public hall of that place. The entry runs as follows: "Sampstag nach Reminiscere, 1526: Item ij ll. x sh. geben Holbein dem moler, für etliche schilt am stettlin Waldenburg vergangener Iaren zemolen."[1] Unimportant commissions of this nature cannot have been of much help in keeping the wolf from the door, and that he was willing to undertake such mere journeyman's work, in which his splendid talents could have little opportunity for their full display, affords proof that for the time being an artist's life in Switzerland was a very precarious one.

Happily for him, at about this time his old patron Jakob Meyer "zum Hasen" gave him a commission for a votive picture, in which he and the members of his family were to be represented as kneeling in adoration under the direct protection of the Virgin Mary, a work in the painting of which his genius found complete expression.[2] Meyer, who since 1521 had been removed from all public offices, was a thorough-going adherent of the old religion, and the party to which he belonged was by this time in the minority; but his sturdy belief remained unshaken, and in 1529, immediately before the fiercest iconoclastic outburst in the city, he was at the head of the Catholic party. At the time when the greater number of his fellow-citizens were beginning to view with disfavour all sacred paintings, he proved that he had the courage of his convictions by ordering this picture, in which his faith was very plainly expressed. It is doubtful whether it was intended to be placed over an altar in some chapel in one of the Basel churches, or to be hung in Meyer's own house, but in either case it was a definite public profession of his faith.

The figures in the picture (Pl. 71) are about three-quarters of the size of life. The Virgin is not represented on her throne, but stands amid the donor's family as the Mother of Grace, her mantle spread over them as a sign of her protection. Holbein has placed her in the centre of the composition in front of a shallow niche with a

[1] Woltmann, i. 316.

[2] Woltmann, 143. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 89; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 65; and elsewhere.

circular arch, fluted like a shell, against which her head is relieved. In her arms she clasps the Infant Christ, whose head rests against her shoulder, his left arm outstretched over the kneeling suppliants below as though in benediction. The edge of her cloak falls over the shoulders of Meyer, who kneels on the left, with hands clasped, gazing upwards in adoration.[1] In front of him kneels his elder son, a youth of about sixteen, whose attention is diverted from his prayers by his small brother, a little naked boy with curly hair, standing upright on the Turkey carpet which is placed beneath the group, whom he is holding with both hands. The child stands, with left arm outstretched, gazing at his open palm. On the right-hand side is a group of three kneeling women, Meyer's second wife, Dorothea Kannengiesser von Tann, with her daughter Anna in front of her, and, next to the Virgin, a third woman who has been taken to represent either the Burgomaster's first wife, Magdalena Baer, who died in 1511, and was a widow when he married her, or her daughter by her earlier marriage. It has been also suggested that the figure represents Meyer's mother, or his mother-in-law, but it is most probable that it is a portrait of his first wife, for it was by no means unusual at that time to combine both the living and the dead in such a votive picture.

This picture is Holbein's greatest masterpiece of sacred painting, noble and dignified in feeling and composition, remarkable for the direct and striking veracity of its portraiture, and the splendour of its rich, subdued colour. There is extraordinary expression in Meyer's head, with its rapt, tense look, in which the depth of his faith is clearly portrayed. His ruddy complexion and blue shaven chin form a strong colour contrast with the fresher, paler flesh tints of his two sons, in whom the likeness to the father can be plainly traced. There is an equal contrast, too, between the face of the living wife, energetic and capable, and that of the other woman, seen in profile, whose features are nearly concealed by the white hood and the chin band she is wearing, giving almost the appearance of grave-clothes, though it was a head-dress then in common use, as can be seen from a number

[1] Dr. Ganz points out the resemblance between this picture and Mantegna's "Madonna of Victory" in the Louvre. In the latter the kneeling suppliants are also protected by the Virgin's cloak, and the movement of her hand, outstretched in benediction over Gonzaga's head, is just the same as that of the Infant Christ in the Meyer votive picture (*Holbein.* p. xxviii.).



THE MEYER MADONNA

DARMSTADT



of Holbein's book illustrations. In the Virgin's face, with its downcast eyes, there is a look of heavenly tranquillity. Her complexion is fair, and her cheeks have a rosy tinge. She wears a golden crown set with pearls and precious stones, below which her golden hair falls upon her shoulders and over her mantle, and is painted with all Holbein's minute care and complete technical mastery. The pale, delicate flesh tints are continued in the body of the Infant Christ and in the hands of his mother, the two heads forming a lovely chord of colour in perfect harmony with the reddish marble and grey stone of the niche against which they are set. The Virgin's dress is dark blue, which has turned almost green with the passing of time, with under-sleeves of gold, in the painting of which actual gold has been used, as also in the crown, and in Anna Meyer's head-dress and other ornamental parts of the picture. Her girdle is red, and her mantle a greenish grey. Meyer's hair is black, and his black surcoat is lined with light-brown fur. The kneeling boy wears a dress of light brown trimmed with bands of dark red velvet, and red hose, and from his belt hangs an elaborate purse with long blue tassels. The colouring of the group on the spectator's right is largely black and white. The two elder women are in black, with plain white head-dresses. The daughter's dress is also white, decorated with deep bands of gold material embroidered with pearls, her head-dress being formed of two similar bands, with crimson tassels, which almost conceal the brown braided hair, and a little wreath of white and red flowers on the top. She gazes across the picture at her little brother, her rosary in her hands, of which, owing to the long sleeves of her dress, only the tips of her fingers can be seen. The Turkey carpet, which falls over the low step upon which the figures are grouped, has an elaborate pattern of red, green, black, and white on a yellow-brown ground. The monotony of its geometrical design is broken by a large irregular fold in the centre, as though the rug had been hastily thrown down and not straightened out. On either side of the shell-shaped circular niche the carved pilasters of two low columns are seen above the heads of the kneeling figures, and the green branches of a vine or fig-tree stand out against a bright blue sky.

The picture, like the Solothurn Madonna, is of peculiar shape, the top of the panel following the lines of the architectural background. It measures about 4 ft. 8½ in. (1.44 m.) to the top of the

circular niche, and 3 ft. 8½ in. (1.125 m.) to the horizontal edge above the pilasters at the side, and is nearly 3 ft. 3½ in. (1.01 m.) wide. It is possible that in its original state it was furnished with a pair of shutters. It is now generally agreed that its date is about 1525 or 1526, and that it was the last work of importance painted by Holbein before he left Basel. Meyer took a second wife in 1513, and their daughter Anna, who afterwards married Nikolaus Irmi, appears in the picture to be about the age of twelve, which gives the year 1526 as the one in which Holbein received the commission. Nothing is known of the two boys, who must have died young, for Meyer left no male heirs. After his decease his widow was twice married, and on her death in or about 1549 her heir was her daughter Anna. The elder boy was perhaps the son of the first wife. The technical qualities of the painting, too, place it in the years immediately preceding Holbein's first visit to England.

There are three preliminary studies for the picture in the Basel Gallery, portrait heads of the ex-burgomaster, his wife, and their daughter.[1] All three are drawn in his customary manner in black chalk, with spare use of coloured chalks and water-colour here and there. The head of Meyer (Pl. 72 (1)),[2] in black and red, is in the same position as in the picture, and placed against a greenish background. His wife (Pl. 72 (2)) [3] is also taken in the position she occupies in the finished work, but her head-dress is a different one, and the chin and the greater part of the mouth are hidden by a linen band similar to the one worn by the unknown kneeling woman. Red is used in the face, and brown for the hair, which is seen through the muslin cap, and for the fur lining to the collar of her gown. The daughter, Anna,[4] is shown almost at three-quarter length, with the arms and hands visible. She wears the same dress with embroidered bands as in the picture, but her hair, instead of being almost hidden by the elaborate cap, hangs down straightly below her waist. More colour is used in this drawing than in the others, the face being worked in flesh tints, the hair of a golden-brown colour, the girdle red, and the ornaments of the collar in yellow, while the background is washed with pale green. The

[1] Woltmann, 40–42.

[2] Reproduced by Davies, p. 90; Knackfuss, fig. 86.

[3] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 18 (in colour); Davies, p. 92; Knackfuss, fig. 87.

[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 56; Davies, p. 94; Knackfuss, fig. 88.

Vol. I. Part. 12

ДОКЛАДЫ АКАДЕМИИ НАУК СССР

1936 ВЫПУСК 7

академик Игорь Тамм

Физический институт Московского государственного университета имени М. В. Ломоносова

Представлено 12 VII 1936

JAKOB MEYER

DOROTHEA KANNENGIESSER

Studies for the Meyer Madonna

Drawings in black and coloured chalks

BASEL GALLERY





effect produced is very delicate and beautiful, and the portrait is perhaps finer and more natural than in the picture itself. These drawings closely resemble in style those which Holbein produced shortly afterwards in England, and approach them very nearly in their complete mastery of expressive line.

For many years the fine early copy of the Meyer Madonna in the Dresden Gallery [1] was regarded as Holbein's original work, and one of the greatest treasures of the collection, and it was not until 1822, when the Darmstadt picture, purchased in that year by Prince William of Prussia from a Parisian picture-dealer, was first brought to the notice of connoisseurs, that any doubt was thrown upon the authenticity of the better-known example, which was then almost universally regarded as one of the greatest masterpieces of the German school. A few German critics of note, among them Dr. Kugler, admitted that the Darmstadt picture was a genuine work by Holbein, but it was many years before anyone had the temerity to refuse a like honour to the famous example in Dresden. The first to do so publicly was Wornum, in his Life of Holbein, published in 1867, and he was followed by Woltmann, A. von Zahn, and others.[2] In spite of such critics, however, both pictures were still regarded by most people as from Holbein's own hand, and it was not until the Holbein Exhibition, held in Dresden in 1871, when the two panels were placed side by side, and a close comparison became possible, that the undoubted genuineness of the Darmstadt painting was admitted by all except the few who had a personal interest in upholding the prestige of the Dresden Gallery, and who, therefore, refused to believe that their own picture was a mere copy, however good. Throughout the autumn of 1871, a fierce battle raged between the contending parties, and Dresden was split up into two hostile camps. A manifesto was issued by thirteen of the leading critics, headed by Woltmann, Thausing, De Lutzow, and A. Bayersdorfer, affirming their belief that the Darmstadt picture was indubitably a genuine work by Holbein, with considerable and later retouches in the heads of the Virgin, the Infant Christ, and the Burgomaster, and that the Dresden Madonna was a free copy of it, in which the hand of Holbein was not to be seen in any part. The other party retaliated with a manifesto

[1] Reproduced by Davies, p. 88 ; Knackfuss, fig. 90 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 209.
[2] See Wornum, p. 166 ; Woltmann, i. pp. 300–14.

of their own, in which they claimed that the modifications of the design in the Dresden example were so free, and were such great improvements, particularly in the spacing and the proportions of the figures, that no one but Holbein could have accomplished it, and that he alone could have given so lofty an ideality and beauty of expression to the figure of the Virgin, and that the picture remained a monument which attested the culminating point of German art. The Darmstadt picture, on the other hand, they found to be so badly obscured by dirty varnish and partial repaints that it was impossible to judge seriously the question of its originality. An interesting account of the dispute was given in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* [1] by the artist Rudolf Lehmann, who was a staunch upholder of the genuineness of the better-known picture. He saw in it a greater beauty, maturity, and nobility, and held that the modifications were so intelligent as to be in reality corrections of the earlier work, and therefore only from the hand of the master himself.

The Darmstadt picture had certainly suffered from retouching in many places, but in 1887 it underwent a careful cleaning at the hands of Hauser of Munich, by means of which the dirt and the spurious paint were removed. It was then found to be in a very perfect state of preservation, with the original splendour of its colour almost undimmed, and the details as fine and as clear as when Holbein first painted them. The differences between the two pictures are many, but in colour, in expression, and in technical achievement the one at Darmstadt is far superior. The copyist who produced the Dresden picture has apparently attempted to improve upon the original, by beautifying the face of the Madonna, which has lost much of its character in the process, and giving a more graceful form to the rather thickset, stumpy figure of the original, so characteristic of Holbein. The proportions of the background have been also changed, with the same idea of improvement. The copyist appears to have thought that the top of the semicircular niche pressed too closely upon the Virgin's head, and he accordingly raised it, thus relieving what he considered to be a cramped position; whereas in Holbein's original arrangement, in which the diameter of the semicircle cuts across the shoulders of the figure, the spacing is more effective than in the copy, in which the line passes through the Virgin's neck. In the same way

[1] December 1871, iv., 2nd period, pp. 516–19.

the pilasters over the kneeling figures on either side have been raised well above the heads, so that the upper parts of the columns become visible. In richness and harmony of colour the Darmstadt version is far finer. In the Dresden copy the Virgin's dress is green, which proves that it was painted at some time considerably later than the original, when the blue of the latter had taken on a greenish tint from the discoloration of the varnish. Again, the extraordinary delicacy and precision of the draughtsmanship of all the details of dress is far more marked in the original work, in which, too, there is much greater expression and animation in the faces.

The history of the Darmstadt picture can be traced, with few breaks, from the day it was painted. On the death of Dorothea Meyer about 1549 it passed into the possession of her daughter Anna and the latter's husband, Nikolaus Irmi, or Irmy (1507–52). Anna Irmi, who married, after Irmi's death, Wilhelm Hebdenring, and died a widow in 1558, left it to her daughter Rosa or Rosina, who, in 1576, married, as his third wife, Remigius Faesch, burgomaster of Basel. Rosa died about 1606, and shortly afterwards Faesch sold the picture for one hundred golden crowns (*coronatos aureos solares*) to a certain Lucas Iselin. This information is contained in a Latin manuscript in the Basel Library, which was written about the middle of the seventeenth century by a second Remigius Faesch, grandson of the burgomaster. He was a doctor of laws, and a collector of pictures, and his manuscript bears the title, " Humanæ Industriæ Monumenta." The thirty-fifth folio is concerned with Holbein, and from it the history of the picture may be taken a step farther. Faesch says : " In the year 163–, the above-named painter, Le Blond, bought here of the widow and heirs of Lucas Iselin, of St. Martin's, a painting on wood, about three Basel ells in size, the height and width being the same ; in which were represented the foresaid Burgomaster Jakob Meier, together with his sons on the right side, and on the opposite side his wife with the daughters, all painted from life, kneeling before the altar. I possess copies of a son and a daughter, painted in Belgium from the picture itself by Joh. Ludi. Le Blond paid for the picture 1000 imperials, and sold it afterwards for three times as much to Maria de' Medici, Queen Dowager of France, mother of King Louis XIII, while she was residing in Belgium, where she died. Whither it afterwards went, is uncertain." A marginal note, added

by Faesch, probably at a later date, further states: "This panel belonged to my grandfather, the Burgomaster Remigius Faesch, from whom Lucas Iselin gained possession of it, ostensibly for the ambassador of the King of France, and paid 100 gold crowns for it about the year 1606." [1]

Lucas Iselin died in 1626, and his heirs appear to have sold the picture some years afterwards to Michel Le Blond, the German engraver, who lived for the greater part of his life in Amsterdam, where he was occupied in providing engraved plates of ornaments for the use of jewellers, and was also a picture collector and dealer. He acted as agent to the Court of Sweden at Amsterdam, and in 1625 he negotiated for the Duke of Buckingham the purchase of a large collection of works of art from Rubens. He was a friend of Sandrart, Holbein's biographer, and travelled with him in Italy.

Sandrart, in his Life of Holbein, continues the history of the picture, and in speaking of Le Blond's collection, says: "This gentleman has long ago" (*lang vorher*)—he refers to some time before he, Sandrart, was in Amsterdam, about 1640–45—"sold to the bookkeeper (or banker) Johann Lössert, at his urgent request for the sum of 3000 gulden, a standing figure of the Virgin painted on a panel, holding her little Child in her arms, and under her is a carpet on which some figures are kneeling before her, taken from life." [2] Sandrart's description shows that the picture in question was undoubtedly the Meyer Madonna, and this is confirmed by Patin's account. The latter had access to the Faesch manuscript, and speaks of it as "A standing Mary on a panel with the Child on her arm, under her a carpet on which some figures are kneeling before her, painted from the life."

Sandrart's story indicates that Faesch must have been wrong in stating that Le Blond sold the picture to Maria de' Medici, then in exile in Holland; she appears to have been contented with a copy of it. Sandrart himself took sketches of some of the figures, and others were made, according to Faesch, by Joh. Ludi. This was Johannes Lüdin, a pupil of Sarburgh, who has been confused by earlier writers with Giovanni da Lodi, an obscure painter whose work is to be found in several churches in Lodi. Wornum thought that Giovanni might have been the author of the Dresden copy of the picture,[3] but later researches have shown this to be a mistake. Quite recently (1911),

[1] Woltmann, ii. pp. 49–50. See Appendix (E). [2] Woltmann, i. p. 296. [3] Wornum, p. 171.

Dr. E. Major has identified it as a copy made for Queen Maria de' Medici by Bartholomäus Sarburgh, a portrait-painter who, in 1634, was living at the Hague, which was about the time the picture went to Holland. Sarburgh, who was born about 1590, worked in Basel and in Berne, and may have known the painting in his youth. It is extremely probable, in Dr. Major's opinion, that the Dresden example is identical with the copy known to have been in the possession of the French Queen.[1] There are numerous copies of Holbein's works by Sarburgh still in Basel, and several portraits by him in the Picture Gallery of that city.

It has also been suggested that Faesch was mistaken in saying that Le Blond bought the picture from Iselin's widow in Basel, and that in reality he obtained it from Iselin himself at some earlier date; for in 1621 there was an important example of Holbein's work in Amsterdam which the Earl of Arundel was anxious to obtain. Sir Dudley Carleton, writing to the Earl from the Hague, 22nd June 1621, says: "Having wayted lately on y^e^ K. and Q. of Bohemia to Amsterdam, I there saw y^e^ picture of Holben's yo^r^ L^p^. desires; but cannot yet obtayne it, though my indeavours wayte on it, as they still shall doe."[2] Sir Dudley, however, gives no description of the picture, which he was unable to get for the Earl, so that it is impossible to say more than that there is some probability that it may have been the Meyer Madonna.

Sandrart, who was a personal friend of Le Blond, is no doubt correct when he says that the latter sold it direct to the banker Johann Lössert; and it remained in the possession of that family for some seventy or eighty years. It next appears in a sale of the pictures of Jacob Cromhout and Jasper Loskart, held at Amsterdam on the 7th and 8th May 1709, the latter evidently a descendant of Johann Lössert. According to the catalogue, both owners were deceased, and the greater number of the pictures seem to have belonged to Cromhout, the catalogue-heading concluding with the words, "and some other fine pictures coming from the cabinet of the deceased Herr Jasper Loskart."[3] It is possible that the two owners were relations, or

[1] *Anzeiger für Schweiz. Altertumskunde*, N. F. xii. 4. Sarburgh painted a portrait of Remigius Faesch. See Appendix (E).

[2] Sainsbury, *Original unpublished Papers, illustrative of the Life of P. P. Rubens*, &c., 1859, Appendix, No. liii. p. 290. Quoted by Wornum, p. 170.

[3] Woltmann, i. p. 298; ii. p. 56.

partners in business, as the coat of arms of the Cromhouts is on the old frame of the Darmstadt panel, indicating that at some time or other the picture had been transferred from the one family to the other.[1] The picture was No. 24 in the sale, and was described as, "A capital piece, with two doors, representing Mary with Jesus on her arm, with various kneeling figures from life, by Hans Holbeen—fl. 2000"; just double the price paid for a large altar-piece by Rubens in the same sale, and equal to about £160 in modern money, a large price for a picture in those days. It will be seen that in 1709 it still had wings, which have since disappeared.

For more than one hundred years after the Cromhout sale all traces of the picture are missing, though it appears to have been in England for at least a part of the time, for on the back is written in English: "No. 82, Holy Family, Portraits, A.D.," the latter initials indicating that when here it was attributed to Dürer. On the old seventeenth-century frame there are, in addition to the Cromhout coat of arms, the armorial bearings of a member of the Von Warberge family and his wife, apparently indicating yet another ownership. It reappeared in 1822, when it was purchased by Prince William of Prussia from the Parisian picture-dealer Delahante, through the latter's brother-in-law, Spontini, at that time royal musical director in Berlin, at a cost of 2500 or 2800 thalers—about £420. On the death of the Prince its purchase for the Berlin Museum was urged by Dr. Waagen, but the authorities were not willing to consider it. On the division of the Prince's property, it was assigned to his daughter, Princess Elizabeth, who married Prince Charles of Hesse-Darmstadt in 1836; and from that day the picture has remained in the private apartments of the old palace.

The first definite information about the Dresden version is that at the beginning of the eighteenth century it was in Venice, in the possession of the Delfino family, from whose representative, Giovanni Delfino, it was purchased by Count Francesco Algarotti on the 4th September 1743, for Augustus III, Elector of Saxony, for one thousand sequins. A previous attempt to buy it had been made by the Duke of Orleans in 1723. It is to be gathered from Algarotti's correspondence that the picture had been bequeathed to Delfino's father by the Venetian banker Avogadro, and, according to an old

[1] The history of the Dresden copy, given below, bears out this supposition.

servant of the latter's, named Griffoni, his master had obtained it in or about the year 1690 in Amsterdam as payment for a debt of 2000 sequins owing to him by the house of Lössert, which had recently become bankrupt. Algarotti was of opinion that it was the very picture mentioned by Sandrart. As, however, the original picture was still in Amsterdam in 1709 (the date of the Cromhout sale), nearly twenty years after Avogadro is said to have received it, the version which went to Venice can only have been a copy, which it is now known to be. It appears, therefore, that at one time Loskart or Lössert possessed two versions of the picture; and it may be conjectured that at the time of the bankruptcy, or perhaps earlier, the original was sold to or taken over by Cromhout, and the early seventeenth-century copy retained, until it was given to Avogadro in lieu of the debt. It is not, however, necessary to suppose that the transaction was an underhand one, and that a copy was knowingly palmed off on the banker as an original, for very possibly by that time both pictures were regarded as genuine works by Holbein.

At the time the Venetian example was purchased for the Elector of Saxony, it was generally regarded as a portrait-group of the More family, owing to the similarity of the names Meyer and More. Horace Walpole, who saw it in Venice, gave it its correct title. He says, when referring to the various examples existing of the More family group: "The fifth[1] was in the palace of the Delfino family at Venice, where it was long on sale, the first price set, 1500*l.* When I saw it there in 1741 they had sunk it to 400*l.*, soon after which the present King of Poland bought it. . . . The old man is not only unlike all representations of Sir Thomas More, but it is certain that he never had but one son. For the colouring, it is beautiful beyond description, and the carnations have that enamelled bloom so peculiar to Holbein, who touched his works till not a touch remained discernible! A drawing of this picture by Bischop was brought over in 1723, from whence Vertue doubted both of the subject and the painter; but he never saw the original! By the description of the family-picture of the Consul Mejer, mentioned above, I have no doubt but this is the very picture—Mejer and More are names not so unlike but that in process of time they may have been confounded, and that of More retained, as much better known."[2]

[1] Elsewhere he speaks of it as the sixth. [2] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, 1888, i. 93.

The cost of the picture was 1000 sequins, or 22,000 livres de Venise—about £458 in English money—and the expenses in connection with its purchase, packing, and forwarding to Dresden, came to some £125 more, including a liberal present to the painter Tiepolo, who helped in the negotiations, and smaller gratuities to various retainers of the Delfino family. The total cost, therefore, was considerably more than three times the price paid for the original painting in the Amsterdam sale.

Although the Meyer Madonna possesses no hidden meaning, and is merely a customary representation of a donor and his family kneeling in adoration before the Virgin and Child, yet a number of fanciful interpretations were given to it in the last century, of which some echoes still remain. It has been suggested that it is a votive picture to commemorate the recovery of a sick child, whom the Virgin has taken into her arms, placing her own child on the ground among the donors. This idea was carried still farther by others, who saw in the infant on the Madonna's breast the soul of a dead child ; while a third theory propounded was to the effect that the little one was merely the soul of the woman kneeling next the Virgin, supposed to be Meyer's first wife. These are all sentimental refinements of nineteenth-century German criticism, first voiced by such writers as Ludwig Tieck and Friedrich Schlegel, and in all probability would never have been heard of had the original picture been in Dresden instead of the copy. In the latter the unknown copyist has not been so successful in the figure of the infant Christ as in other portions of the picture. It is far less animated than in the original, and a little sickly and unhappy in expression, and it was this, no doubt, which first suggested these over-refinements of meaning. Ruskin was on the side of the sentimentalists. He says : " The received tradition respecting the Holbein Madonna is beautiful, and I believe the interpretation to be true. A father and mother have prayed to her for the life of their sick child. She appears to them, her own Child in her arms. She puts down her Christ before them, takes their child into her arms instead ; it lies down upon her bosom, and stretches its hands to its father and mother, saying farewell." [1] As a matter of fact, there is nothing of death or sickness about the work, which tells its

[1] Ruskin, "Sir Joshua and Holbein," *Cornhill Magazine*, March 1860, p. 328 ; reprinted in *On the Old Road*, vol. i. pt. i., pp. 221–236.

story with the utmost simplicity and mastery of means, without needing such refined subtleties for its proper explanation.

It is difficult to follow Holbein's latest English biographer, Mr. G. S. Davies, in his belief that the influence of Gherardt David can be seen in this work, and, in particular, to find, as he does, indications of Holbein's acquaintance with David's great picture of the "Madonna with the Saints and Angels," now in the Rouen Museum, but in Holbein's day, and for three centuries afterwards, in the Carmelite Church in Bruges, for which it had been painted. "I do not think that any one who thoroughly knew the Darmstadt Holbein can fail," he says, "as he looks at this masterpiece of the Flemish painter, to be at once reminded by something in the feeling and in the type of Madonna, and even in such details as the choice of crown and robe, in the outspread mantle, in the fashion of the robe, in the wavy golden hair lying along the shoulder, and in the pose of the head as she looks down at the Child, of the greater German master. Holbein's is a stronger, more intensely sympathetic, more real and convincing vision; but the original type seems to be common to both men."[1] To render this possible, a visit to Bruges on Holbein's part becomes necessary, and Mr. Davies considers it to be most probable that he did so either on his way to England in 1526 or on his return in 1528, and he states, but without bringing forward any proofs, that Holbein "spent several months in or about Antwerp" on the former journey, and that he would not be likely to omit a visit to so great a centre of art as Bruges. This theory also necessitates the alteration of the date of the painting of the Meyer Madonna, whereas everything points to its completion before Holbein left Basel for England; nor will he find many to agree with him that in this great picture, so essentially German in feeling, strong traces of Flemish influence are to be seen. Such alien influence as can be traced in it is undoubtedly Italian.

For the Meyer Madonna, Holbein's wife no longer served as the model for the Virgin, as she had done for the Madonna of Solothurn. Her place was taken by that lady of somewhat notorious character in Basel, Magdalena Offenburg. As pointed out in an earlier chapter, she had already twice served Holbein as a model for his costume studies of Basel ladies,[2] and she also sat to him for the two pictures of "Venus" and "Laïs Corinthiaca" in the Basel Gallery, in which the similarity

[1] Davies, p. 94–5.

[2] See p. 158.

of features to those of the Virgin in the Darmstadt altar-piece is very marked, while all three bear an evident likeness to the model of that one of the costume studies in which the sitter wears a necklace with the recurring initials " M. O." Her daughter Dorothea, wife of Joachim von Sultz, who at one time was considered to be the lady represented in the " Laïs " and " Venus " pictures,[1] led an equally scandalous life. She was divorced in 1545, and both she and her husband were imprisoned, and afterwards expelled the country.

These two small, delicately painted portraits of Magdalena Offenberg as " Laïs " and " Venus," the former being dated " 1526," were among the last works produced by Holbein before he left Basel for England. They bear a very close resemblance to one another, except in the position of the head, so that one appears to be almost a copy of the other. In the Amerbach catalogue of 1586 they are described as : " Zwei täfelin doruf eine Offenburgin conterfehet ist vf eim geschriben Lais Corinthiaca, die ander hat ein kindlin bÿ sich. H. Holb. beide, mit ölfarben vnd in ghüsern." In each the figure is about one-third the size of life, and the costume is the same, a rich dress of dark red velvet with slashings showing white silk puffs, each fastened at top and bottom with gold tags. The wide upper sleeves are of a deep gold hue. In each picture she is shown at almost three-quarter length, behind a plain stone parapet, with a dark green curtain as background. In the " Laïs " (No. 322) (Pl. 73 (2)) [2] she wears a closely fitting gold-embroidered head-dress or cap on her fair hair, and with her left hand grasps the folds of a blue mantle draped across her knees. On the parapet in front of her—which is inscribed " Lais Corinthiaca. 1526," in Roman letters, as though incised in the stone—is placed a little heap of scattered gold coins, and she is holding out her right hand, with palm upwards, as though asking for more of them in payment for her favours. The pose is slightly varied in the " Venus " (No. 323) (Pl. 73 (1)),[3] which is undated, the head being bent a little to the right, instead of to the left, and there are small changes in the costume. The lower sleeves of red slashed velvet are omitted, and the arms are bare to the elbow, while the head-dress is black, with a little gold ornamentation. The position of the hands is almost the same, though the

[1] She was, however, born in 1508, and so would be too young for the lady of these pictures.
[2] Woltmann, 17. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 91 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 40.
[3] Woltmann, 18. Reproduced by Davies, p. 102 ; Knackfuss, fig. 92 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 41.


FLAIS CORINTHIAC A. 1526





MAGDALENA OFFENBURG AS VENUS

1526

MAGDALENA OFFENBURG AS LAIS

1526

BASEL GALLERY




CORINTHIACA 1526

left one is hidden by the head and shoulders of a small naked, red-haired Cupid, whose right arm rests on the parapet with two long arrows in his hand. The golden coins are missing, but the open palm of the lady's right hand carries the same suggestion as in the "Laïs." The old frame still retains the curious and singularly inappropriate inscription, "Verbum Domini manet in æternum," which was upon it when the Amerbach Collection was purchased by the town of Basel in 1662.

The face is a refined one, with a high forehead, long nose, finely cut lips, and fair complexion, and in the "Laïs" in particular, does not suggest the supposed character of the sitter as tradition has handed it down. It is possible that the painter to some extent idealised her features. The "Venus" is less tender and attractive in expression; so much so, indeed, that Woltmann[1] suggests that it was painted at an earlier date, and that the "Laïs" was a renewed and more successful attempt to represent the same idea. What that idea may have been has given rise to considerable speculation. Wornum[2] quotes an old legend to the effect that the artist could not obtain payment for the "Venus" picture, and so, in revenge, he painted her as the famous courtesan, Laïs of Corinth, the mistress of the great painter Apelles; but this explanation is an absurd one. Woltmann's suggestion is that both pictures were painted for some lover of the lady, who wished, in the first instance, to express his love, and then, later on, his contempt. It is more probable that the pictures were the result of relationships between the painter himself and Magdalena, though beyond the fact that she served him more than once as a model, there is no proof of this. This supposed connection between Holbein and the lady has given rise to much imaginative writing in recent monographs. In one of them we are told that "when Holbein inscribed his second portrait of Dorothea with the words Laïs Corinthiaca, the midsummer madness must have been already a matter of scorn and wonder to himself. His whole life and the works of his life are the negation of the groves of Corinth. The paint was not long dry on the Goddess of Love—at any rate, her dress was not worn out—before he had seen her in her true colours: the daughter of the horse-leech, crying 'Give, give.' And so he painted her in 1526; to

[1] Woltmann, 1st ed., Eng. trans., p. 289. Omitted in 2nd ed.
[2] Wornum, p. 163.

scourge himself, surely, since she was too notoriously infamous to be affected by it. As if in stern scorn of every beauty, every allure, he set himself to record them in detail. . . . Laïs is far more beautiful, and far more beautifully painted, than Venus. No emotion has hurried the painter's hand or confused his eye this time. In vain she wears such sadness in her eyes, such pensive dignity of attitude, such a wistful smile on her lips. He knows them, now, for false lights on the wrecker's coast. No faltering; no turning back. He can even fit a new head-dress on the lovely hair, and add the puffed sleeves below the short ones. He is a painter now; not a lover. . . . The plague was raging in Basel all through that spring and summer, but I doubt if Holbein shuddered at its contact as at the loveliness he painted," [1] and so on. This is all very pretty, but the imagination of the writer has run away with her. What suggestion could be more fantastic than that in painting the Venus, Holbein's love for the lady was so great that both hand and eye faltered in depicting her charms, and that he could only do full justice to her beauty when his affection was dead and her loveliness made him shudder? A more recent writer [2] is of opinion that Holbein succumbed to the charms of Magdalena Offenburg before his marriage, and that she deigned to honour the young Swabian painter with her favours almost directly after his return to Basel from Lucerne. Though forced to confess that he can find no traces of her as Holbein's model in any of his finished paintings of the period before Elsbeth Schmidt came into his life, in his opinion she served him in that capacity not only for the series of studies of the costumes worn by the Basel ladies, but also for his early glass designs of the Madonna gazing down at the Infant Christ in her arms, the St. Barbara of the same set, and the fine design of a wooden statue of St. Michael, all three of which have been already described.[3] No doubt the type of face in all these studies is much the same, but there is a tendency in this search for likenesses to go too far, and to see Magdalena Offenburg or Elsbeth Schmidt as the only models used by Holbein at this time. In some instances the likeness is largely imaginary. His wife, the same writer continues, may not have been beautiful, but she certainly had charm, as the portrait at the Hague proves, and Holbein must have

[1] Mrs. G. Fortescue, *Holbein*, p. 105–6.

[2] T. de Wyzewa, "À propos d'un Livre nouveau sur Holbein le Jeune," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th Jan. 1912.

[3] See pp. 79 and 137–8.

loved her when he painted her. For two years afterwards he remained the devoted husband, using her as the model for the Solothurn Madonna, the Virgin of the Basel organ-doors, and for the glass design of the Mary in the niche with the cavalier kneeling before her. Then, after this short period of happiness, her place in the pictures and designs is again taken by Magdalena. The impudent creature appears as the St. Ursula of the Karlsruhe painting, and the "arrows in her hands are those with which in succeeding years she is to pierce the poor heart of the painter's wife." In the Meyer Madonna, this writer sees in the Virgin nothing but the elegant, banal visage of the courtesan, and a complete want of all humanity. The "Laïs" and "Venus" of 1526, he adds, affirm finally and cynically the victory of the mistress over the legitimate wife, while the last and worst insult of all was in using his own eldest child as the model for the Cupid, and placing him in the company of the hateful rival, who in the end robbed his wife of all her beauty and all her happiness. There may be some truth in this attempt to reconstruct a few pages of Holbein's life-story, but there is little proof to support it. Where proof is lacking, however, the writer's imagination fills the gaps; but it is not fair to condemn the painter upon such evidence as this, or to hold him guilty of infamous conduct upon the strength of a few supposed likenesses in his pictures or designs.

Whatever Holbein's personal relations to Magdalena Offenburg may have been, she appears to have been a good model, which is in itself quite sufficient to explain the fact that he painted these two portraits of her. That he held her in no particular esteem may be gathered from the name he gives her, just as Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, as noted in a previous chapter, wrote an offensive remark as to her character on the drawing he made of her. Her face, as represented by Holbein, is fair, but devoid of any strong feeling, though Knackfuss holds that "a deep and quiet sorrow lies in the expression of the refined face;" and that "the sense of the two paintings is explained by their juxtaposition: the gold which she desired cannot make the young woman happy; love alone can do so."[1] This last-named writer considers that the pictures were not painted to some one's order, but for the artist's own amusement.

[1] Knackfuss, p. 115.

A question of much more interest in connection with these two works is their authorship. They differ from all other portraits by Holbein of the Basel period, because in them the Milanese influence upon his art is seen at its strongest, so that more than one writer of repute has refused to admit that they are his work. Rumohr regarded them as from the hand of some Netherlandish painter, and Waagen was of opinion that Holbein painted them under Netherlandish influence. Wornum considered them to be the work of some Milanese. "The style of the painting," he says, "is more Milanese, in colouring and in treatment, than anything else, exceedingly elaborate, cool in colour, dry in manner, and altogether unlike any other known work by our painter. In this case I have not the slightest faith in the Amerbach inventory. . . . The two portraits have a decided Milanese character, in the manner of the scholars of Leonardo da Vinci. A visit to Milan could not have had such a wonderful influence on Holbein's taste as is shown in these portraits, or if such be allowed to be possible, it is just as remarkable that he should have laid this taste down again without leaving a trace behind." [1]

Mr. Davies follows Wornum, but goes still farther in suggesting the name of the North Italian artist who painted them. He says: "I may say at once that I am quite unable to see any Netherlandish influence or probable authorship in the pictures. On the other hand, I see the strongest evidence of Lombard influence, and that in so direct a fashion and to such a degree that I believe them to be the work of some Lombard artist who had come under the influence of the later work of Raphael. The name of Cesare da Sesto at once occurs to one, and if it were not for the date 1526 on the Laïs picture, there would be no great difficulty in accepting it as a work by him which had found its way across from Milan—possibly even in the pack of Holbein himself." [2] He acknowledges the difficulty of the date—Da Sesto was dead in 1526—and also of the red-haired Cupid in the Venus picture, so evidently both German and from Holbein's own hand, and bearing so close a resemblance to the children in other pictures of his, such as the Meyer Madonna and the Family Group of 1528; but in spite of this, his final opinion is that they are most probably the work of Cesare da Sesto. He further suggests that Holbein, "possessing, or seeing in the possession of Amerbach, these two small examples, very similar

[1] Wornum, pp. 162–4.

[2] Davies, pp. 102–3.

in attitude and motive," sought to give them variety, by inserting the figure of Cupid in the one, and thus giving this Italian lady the character of Venus, and in the other the gold coins and the title of Laïs, " so as to turn a somewhat unmeaning picture of a woman into a quasi-classical personality." " The Offenburg tradition," he adds, " I should wholly reject, nor indeed can I persuade myself that these pictures are portraits by Holbein either of that shadowy lady or of any other lady whatever. They appear to me to be pictures, not of some well-marked personality, but merely Lombard school types."

It is impossible to follow Mr. Davies in this attribution. Woltmann's opinion, with which most modern critics are in agreement, that they are genuine works by Holbein in which Lombard influence is more strongly marked than in most of his other Basel paintings, is the correct one. The two panels are unmistakably the product of a northern painter working under some southern influence, and just as unmistakably the work of Holbein himself, as a close comparison with his other work of this period shows very plainly. This Milanese influence was the result of his visit to Lombardy, and is to be traced in a greater or lesser degree in all that he accomplished previously to his first visit to England. " Their warm, transparent technique and the realistic ungracefulness of the draperies," says Mr. C. J. Holmes, speaking of the Laïs and its companion, " make them characteristic northern works, just as the Raphaelesque folds and cool opaque pigment of Cesare da Sesto in his later paintings—the small Madonna in the Brera, for example—are characteristically southern." [1] Possibly for once in a way Holbein was making a conscious attempt to imitate the manner of some artist of the North Italian school whose work he had seen and admired, perhaps in Basel itself, so that the Lombard influence is more pronounced than in those pictures and designs in which he was less evidently making an experiment based upon what he had seen in Italy, and in which his own native genius was the predominating force. For the same reason it is very possible that in the Laïs and the Venus, Holbein, instead of following his model closely, gave play to his imagination, and attempted, as the type of face, with downcast eyes, and pensive, almost melancholy charm of expression suggests, to emulate the Leonardesque manner, so that

[1] *Burlington Magazine*, vol. iv. No. xi. (Feb. 1904) p. 187.

at the best they are merely idealised representations of the notorious Magdalena Offenburg.

There is no doubt that during the summer of 1526, in spite of his reputation as a painter, he found it increasingly difficult to gain a living, and that, in consequence, he made up his mind to seek his fortunes in some other country, and finally decided to visit England. In those early days of the Reformation in Switzerland, when the ecclesiastical disputes were assuming so acute a form, and risings of the peasants and other violent disturbances were growing common, there was very little opportunity for artists to find remunerative employment, and Holbein suffered with the rest. The town authorities had no time for considering such important public works as the completion of the Town Hall decorations, and all that they could find for him to do was an ill-paid job or two at long intervals, such as the one already mentioned,[1] which in happier times would have been hardly worth his attention. Basel, indeed, no longer offered a means of livelihood to a painter with a wife, a stepson, and two children of his own to keep. Throughout this year, too, the plague was raging in the city, and this may have proved the last straw which definitely turned his thoughts in the direction of England.

Numerous legends have grown up around this journey of his, which for the most part have no foundation in fact. The commonest, first voiced by Van Mander, is to the effect that the Earl of Arundel, when passing through Basel on his way home from Italy some years previously, was so delighted with Holbein's work that he urged him to try his fortunes in England. Later on, when Holbein had taken his advice, he was asked by Sir Thomas More, who it was who had suggested this course to him. Holbein replied that he had forgotten the nobleman's name, but, taking up a piece of charcoal, he rapidly sketched a face, which the Chancellor instantly recognised. Another version gives the Earl of Surrey as Holbein's adviser; but the tale is a pure legend, and has been told of more than one painter.

Another story, which has been often repeated, gives as the reason of his departure the desire to escape from the constant tempers of an ill-humoured wife, and that he therefore left Basel surreptitiously, without obtaining the necessary leave of absence from the Town Council. His earlier biographers all describe his relationships with

[1] See p. 233.

his wife as not very cordial ones, but they merely copied from one another, and this again may be mere legend. Patin, in particular, whose account of Holbein is palpably exaggerated and often false, describes him as a drunkard, who led a disorderly life, and was always so poverty-stricken that Erasmus and Amerbach had frequently to come to his assistance—a statement entirely devoid of fact, and sufficiently disproved by Holbein's brilliant performances in many branches of art. Patin also, when speaking of Holbein's journey to England, makes use of another favourite story told of numerous artists. He says that on his way he passed through Strasburg, and called on the principal painter of the town, but found him out. An unfinished portrait stood on the easel, whereupon Holbein painted a fly on the forehead, and then left. When the painter returned he attempted to brush it away, imagining it to be a real one, and was so impressed by his unknown visitor's skill, that he at once sought him out, but found that he had already left the town.

It is, of course, possible that Holbein's domestic relations by that time were not as cordial as in earlier days, and that his supposed connection with Magdalena Offenburg may have rendered them still less pleasant, and that this may have had something to do with his departure ; but this again is mere conjecture, of which no actual proof is forthcoming. Want of work was undoubtedly the chief, and possibly the only cause of his journey, and no doubt it was largely the advice of Erasmus which finally decided him to take the step. Erasmus, who had already sent more than one example of Holbein's skill as a portrait-painter to England, had a large circle of friends and patrons here, to whom he could recommend the artist. To Warham and More, at least, Holbein's portrait of Erasmus had already provided an informal introduction, and they may have been aware, also, though this is less likely, that it was he who designed the title-page used in the edition of the *Utopia* published by Froben in 1518, signed " Hans Holb." In 1525 a certain Thomas Grey and his youngest son were living with Erasmus in Basel, according to a letter from the latter to Lupset ; [1] and Grey, too, may have advised Holbein to seek fortune at Henry's court. " Grey," says Erasmus, " reports that there is no disturbance in England," and this news may have proved an added inducement to the painter to quit a country agitated with religious and

[1] *Calendars of Letters and Papers, &c., Hen. VIII*, iv. Pt. i. 1547.

civil contention for a more peaceful locality where the arts could flourish in peace.

Before leaving Basel, Holbein made one last attempt, as already recounted,[1] to obtain from the Antonine Abbey of Isenheim the painting materials which his father had left there some years previously. The strongly-worded letter, dated 4th July 1526, which the Burgomaster of Basel, Heinrich Meltinger, wrote at his request, is addressed to the " venerable Herr Vicar and preceptor of the Order of St. Antonius at Isenenn, our dear and gracious Master," and runs as follows: " Venerable, gracious, and dear sir, receive our friendly and ready service. Hans Holbein, painter, our citizen, has proposed to us to paint an altar panel, such as his deceased father painted in former years. He left some implements of an expensive kind, weighing about three hundred and two cubic measures, with you at Isenheim, which he, Hans Holbein, repeatedly during the lifetime of his father, and at his desire, and also after his decease, being his heir, demanded of you, but could never obtain; for what reasons he knows not. Thus the matter has been delayed to such an extent that the peasants, he is informed, have wasted these implements in the last uproar, and when he again desired them of you, as his father's heir, you referred him, with his request, to the peasants, with whom he has nothing to do, and to whom he has intrusted nothing, and notified to him an appointment on the Saturday after the next Ulrici (7th July) at Ensisheim. We, having heard his business, and given credence to it, and being well inclined to further him, have not allowed him to keep such an appointment, or to make any demand of the peasants (with whom he, as we have heard, has nothing to do), but have firm confidence in you, that you will weigh the matter thoroughly, and hand over to him, as the heir of his deceased father, completely and without difficulty, the aforementioned implements, or, in case nothing of them now exists, compensate him for their loss, and so show yourself towards him in the affair, that he may feel that our intercession has been advantageous, and that no further steps are necessary. Such behaviour on your side we wish for him, to whom it is justly due." [2]

This letter affords proof that Ambrosius Holbein was dead, for in it Hans is mentioned more than once as his father's heir, and it also shows that the Basel Council were not so actively opposed to the

[1] See p. 22.

[2] Woltmann, 1st ed., Eng. trans., p. 292.

painting of altar-pieces as other incidents of the time suggest. Nothing further is known of this altar-panel which Holbein proposed to paint for them.

It is evident that the materials, which would now have been very useful to him, had been destroyed or dispersed in the peasant rising, and that he obtained neither colours nor redress. He left Basel for England on or about August 29, 1526, as appears from a letter of introduction of that date which he carried with him from Erasmus to his friend Peter Ægidius, the learned traveller and town-clerk of Antwerp, in which Holbein was recommended to his notice as the artist who had painted Erasmus. Ægidius is also asked to introduce him to Quentin Metsys. The part of the letter which refers to Holbein (though not by name) runs as follows :—

" The bearer of this letter is the man who painted my portrait. I do not trouble you with any commendation of him, though he is an excellent artist (*artifex*). If he wants to call on Quentin, and you have not leisure to introduce him, you can send a servant with him to show him the house. The arts are freezing in this part of the world, and he is on his way to England to pick up some angels there (*petit Angliam ut corrodat aliquot Angelatos*—Erasmus plays upon the words Angles and Angels). You can send on any letters you like by him." [1] There is no reason to suppose that Holbein delayed his departure after receiving this letter from his patron, who must also have supplied him with introductions to More, Warham, and other friends in England. It was, no doubt, necessary for him to arrange with the Town Council for leave of absence, and this having been done, he must have started not later than the first days of September, reaching London towards the close of the same month.

[1] *Erasmi Opera*, iii. 951.

CHAPTER XII

NATIVE AND FOREIGN ARTISTS IN ENGLAND DURING THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

Henry's VIII's patronage of the fine arts—English painters in his service—John Browne—The Paynter-Stayners' Company—Andrew Wright—John Hethe—Foreign artists at Henry's Court—Gerard, Lucas, and Susanna Hornebolt—Katherine Maynors and Henry Maynert—Johannes Corvus—The Italian painters and sculptors—Paganino—Pietro Torrigiano—Vincent Volpe—Alessandro Carmillian—Antonio Toto and Bartolommeo Penni—Benedetto da Rovezzano and Giovanni da Maiano—Nicolas Bellin of Modena—Girolamo da Treviso.

BEFORE describing the work carried out by Holbein during his first visit to this country, it may be of service to give a short account of the state of art in England at that period, and of the various foreign painters and craftsmen then settled in London, and of the few native artists whose names have survived.

England under Tudor rule offered a far better field for lucrative employment than Basel for a painter of Holbein's genius. Henry VIII was still at the highest point of his reputation as a monarch, popular with all classes of his subjects, and an ardent patron of literature and the fine arts. He was himself one of the most accomplished men of his time within his own realm. He was proficient in Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian, and assiduous in all affairs of state. He was passionately fond of music, and skilful both in its practice and theory, playing well upon the lute, organ, and harpsichord. He also sang and danced well. "His delight in gorgeous pageantry and splendid ceremonial," says Dr. Brewer,[1] "if without any studied design, was not without advantage. Cloth of gold and tissue, New Year's gifts, Christmas masquerades, and May Day mummeries, fell with heavy expense on the nobility, but afforded a cheap and gratuitous amusement to the people. The roughest of the populace were not excluded from their share in the enjoyment. Sometimes, in a boisterous fit of delight, he would allow and even invite the lookers-on to scramble

[1] *Calendars of Letters and papers, &c., Hen. VIII*, i. preface, p. xxv.

for the rich ornaments of his own dress and those of his courtiers. Unlike his father, he showed himself everywhere. He entered with ease into the sports of others, and allowed them with equal ease to share in his."

Henry's Court was considered to be the most magnificent of its time. Large sums were spent on luxuries, on dress, and in other directions. Foreign jewellers, and dealers in the fine arts, found in the King a ready purchaser. He was interested in architecture, and gave a close personal attention to the building and decoration of his various palaces. He was a collector of beautiful armour and weapons, and employed many foreign craftsmen in different decorative arts. In painting he took an equal pleasure, and he was the first of the English kings to form an important collection of pictures, which was hung in a gallery in his palace of Whitehall, of which he himself kept the key. He threw out inducements to foreign artists to settle in England and enter his service, and in his patronage of the fine arts displayed a keen but friendly rivalry with Francis I. These foreigners were chiefly Italian, though a certain number of painters and craftsmen had come over from the Netherlands. Among them all, however, there was no one who in any way approached the greatness of Holbein as an artist. Several men of considerable skill and some artistic pretensions remained in England for more or less lengthy periods, but there was no master of the first rank either from Italy or Flanders. Unlike his rival, Francis I, Henry was unable to attract to his Court men of such outstanding powers as Leonardo da Vinci, Benvenuto Cellini, or Primaticcio, all of whom entered the service of the French Crown. Holbein, indeed, had nothing to fear from the rivalry of any foreigner at that time settled in London, and still less from the numerous English painters, who were of little importance and of mediocre abilities. Native talent, indeed, was at a very low ebb. The influence of the Italian revival of learning made itself felt in this country at an earlier date than that of the renaissance of the arts. No school of English painting was in existence capable of taking advantage of such influence, and of basing a new native art upon it. The English painters, indeed, were hardly painters at all in the modern sense. Many of them were mere house-painters and decorators; tradesmen occupied in various more or less artistic ways, but rarely, if ever, in the painting of pictures or portraits. They were painters of heraldic

devices and shields, of banners and armour, of walls, ceilings, and ships, decorators of temporary buildings for banquets and entertainments, and purveyors of the materials, masks, " antique heads," ornaments, and other properties for the masques and pageants in which the Court delighted. Some of them were employed in making the " plats," or plans, or bird's-eye views of towns, harbours, and fortifications at Calais, Dover, and elsewhere, for the royal use. Occasionally, no doubt, a more ambitious picture was attempted, but the performance can only have been a very inadequate one. Nothing has survived which can be definitely assigned to any one of them ; even such third-rate productions as those preserved at Hampton Court, like " The Battle of Spurs," or " The Field of the Cloth of Gold," for generations attributed to Holbein, were probably not from the hand of an Englishman, but the work of foreigners.

At the time of Holbein's arrival in London, in the winter of 1526–1527, the leading English artist was John Browne, who was serjeant-painter to the King, an office he held for more than twenty years. He was appointed to the post on the 20th December 1511, in the third year of Henry's reign, with an allowance of twopence a day out of the issues of the lordship of Whitley, in Surrey, and four ells of cloth at Christmas, annually, of the value of 6*s.* 8*d.* an ell, from the keeper of the great wardrobe, for his livery.[1]

On the 24th September 1511 he received the balance of his bill for painting the streamers, banners, flags, and staves belonging to the King's ship, *The Mary and John*, amounting to £16, 14*s.* 8*d.*, and on the 17th December in the same year, £142, 4*s.* 6*d.* for painting and staining banners for *The Mary Rose* and *The Peter Pounde Garnarde* (Pomegranate).[2] Browne occasionally employed the services of Vincent Volpe, an Italian, for this banner-painting, and also from time to time supplied the materials for the royal revels. Thus, for the jousts on the 1st June 1512, " 2,100 of party gold " for surcoats was bought from him for £2, 6*s.*, and in the following year he received 10*d.* for the hire of sails " to shadow the percloos for the pageant." [3] In June 1513 he received £4, 8*s.* 8*d.* from the royal purse for painting " divers of the Pope's arms in divers colours," and on the 10th April in the following year he rendered an account for work done on the

[1] *C.L.P.*, i. 2053.
[2] *C.L.P.*, i. 5720.
[3] *C.L.P.*, ii. Pt. ii., Revels Accounts, p. 1499.

King's royal ship, the *Great Harry* or *Henry Grace à Dieu*, which included the supply of flags, banners, and streamers, two of them with crosses of St. George, and painting sixty staves in the King's colours in oil at 6*d*. apiece.[1]

Browne was among those employed upon the temporary buildings at Guisnes, which included a banqueting house and a chapel, and lodgings for Henry and his Queen and the members of the English and French Courts, erected for the purpose of Henry's state visit to France, and his meeting with Francis, known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Sir Nicholas Vaux wrote to Wolsey that they would be able to finish the square court by the last day of May, provided John Rastell, Clement Urmeston, and John Browne, the King's painter, " do make and garnish all the roses—a marvellous great charge, for the roses be large and stately." [2] Later on complaint is made from the same correspondent, that Browne, who has to gild the roofs, has not yet reached Calais.[3] For this work he received two payments of £66, 13*s*. 4*d*., and £333, 6*s*. 8*d*. For the masking at New Hall on the 19th February 1520, he was paid £19, 13*s*. 4*d*. for the beating and putting on the scales of gold and silver on the garments and bonnets of seven children, one in red, powdered with gold suns and clouds ; the second in yellow, powdered with moons and clouds ; the third in blue, powdered with drops of silver ; the fourth powdered with gold primroses ; the fifth with silver honeysuckles ; the sixth with gold stars, and the seventh with silver snowflakes.[4]

By right of his office of serjeant-painter he had the provision of coats for the heralds. Thus, in 1520 he received 40*s*. for a tabard of sarcenet painted for Nottingham pursuivant.[5] In 1523 he rendered an account of " parcellis of stuff " made for the " high and myghty prynce Charlis duke of Suffolke, then beyng a poynttyd to be lyffetenant generall of Kyngis royall armye in to the partyes of France." The items included a standard wrought with fine gold and silver on double sarcenet fringed with silk (£3), banners with the Duke's arms, a coat of arms wrought with fine gold and silks and in oil on double sarcenet for his herald, and escutcheons in metal on paper royal,

[1] *C.L.P.*, i. 4954.
[2] 18th April 1520. *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. i. 750.
[3] 21st May 1520. *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. i. 825.
[4] *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. ii., Revels Accounts, p. 1551.
[5] *Memoir of Henry FitzRoy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset*, Camden Society, 1855, p. 87.

and others in colour, and on buckram, each with his arms, and so on, the total bill amounting to £26, 3s.[1] In 1524, for the revels at Greenwich, in which a castle was assaulted in the tilt-yard, he provided the painted cloths of which the sham buildings were made—"iiij pessys of clothe payntyng of Antuyke, wherewith the Kastell was envenyd," and for various banners and coats of arms, £4, 10s.[2] For revels held on the 10th November 1527, Browne supplied all the materials, including paints, glue, scissors, gold-foil, &c., to the amount of £21, 6s. o½d., which were used for making trees, bushes, branches, roses, rosemary, hawthorn, mulberries, panes of gold, "flosynge of stars," &c., for a "place of plesyer" erected under the superintendence of Richard Gibson at Greenwich. The masque was a theological one, in which Luther and his wife appeared, as well as the Apostles, Religion, Heresy, and similar characters.[3] These various details, which could be multiplied, are sufficient to indicate the kind of work upon which the King's serjeant-painter was usually engaged; and all the other English painters were men of a similar stamp—decorators, scene-painters of a kind, but rarely, if ever, painters of a panel picture.

Browne prospered in his calling, and on May 7, 1522, was elected an Alderman of London for the Ward of Farringdon Without. At first he was unwilling to accept office, and was committed to ward for refusal, but afterwards complied, and was appointed one of the Aldermen to the Haberdashers' Company. In the following year, on July 25th, he was translated to the Ward of Farringdon Within. His service, however, always appears to have been an unwilling one, and in 1525, before he had served the office of Sheriff or Mayor, he was on his own request discharged from the office of Alderman, for which he gave to the Chamber of London two great standing salts of silver gilt. "He made his will on the 17th September 1532, and on the 21st of the same month he conveyed to his brethren of the Paynter-Stayners a house in Trinity Lane, which he had purchased nearly thirty years before, and which has from that time continued to be the Painters' Hall. Dying soon after, he was buried in the church of St. Vedast, at the west end of Chepe; and his will was proved on the 2nd December following."[4]

This will, and the documents in connection with the transference

[1] *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. ii. 3517. [2] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. i. 965. [3] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. ii. 3564.
[4] J. Gough Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. pp. 23–25 (1862).

of the house to the Paynter-Stayners, make us acquainted with the names of many of the English painters at work in London at that period. He left all his books of arms and badges and books of tricks of arms to his apprentice, Rychard Bygnalle, as well as painting materials and other materials at cost price to a second apprentice or "servaunte," John Childe. To Richard Calard and John Howell, both brother painters, he left his best "prymmer" and a doublet respectively. Among other English painters mentioned in the deed of September 21st, 1532, were Andrew Wright, who succeeded him as serjeant-painter, Christopher Wright, Richard Rypyngale, Richard Laine, Thomas Alexander, John Hethe, Richard Gates, Thomas Crystyne, William Lucas, Richard Hauntlowe, and Robert Cope. A later conveyance (of 1549) adds the names of several members of the Wysdom family, and David Playne, Thomas Ballard, Thomas Uncle, Thomas Cob, Thomas Spenser, John Feltes, William Wagynton, William Cudnor, Richard Flint, Richard Wright (probably a son of Andrew), and Melchior Engleberd, a foreigner who had become naturalised.[1]

Walpole[2] mentions John Browne's portrait as still preserved in Painter-Stainers' Hall, but it is not a contemporary work. It represents him attired in the gown and gold chain of an alderman, and was probably painted some time after the Great Fire of 1666, to take the place of an earlier one that had been destroyed.

Andrew Wright succeeded John Browne. On June 19, 1532, he received a grant of the "reversion of the office of the King's serjeant-painter, with an annuity of £10 out of the small custom and subsidy of tonnage and poundage in the port of London, as the said office was granted by patent 12th March, 18 Hen. VIII, to John Browne."[3] In the King's accounts for February 1532 he appears, in the phonetic spelling of the day, as "Andrewe Oret," receiving on the 20th of that month £30 for "painting of the King's barge, and the covering of the same."[4] During 1532 he was at work in Westminster Palace. Thirty-one painters were occupied there upon a large wall-painting of the Coronation of Henry VIII, "made and set out in the Low Gallery by the orchard, as also upon the outsides of the walls

[1] See *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 25.
[2] Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, ed. Wornum, 1888, i. 64.
[3] *C.L.P.*, v. 1139 (30).
[4] *C.L.P.*, v., Privy Purse Expenses of Hen. VIII, Feb. 1532.

of the New Gallery." Both Englishmen and foreigners were engaged. Isaac Lebrune, who appears to have been the foreman painter, received a shilling a day; John Augustyne and Nic. Lasora, tenpence; William Plasyngton, sevenpence; and Robert Short, sixpence. Andrew Wright's share was the gilding of the gallery roof, including the painting and gilding of four "cases of iron for clockis,"[1] the latter being very similar to at least one piece of work undertaken by Holbein in Basel shortly after his return from his first visit to England.

In a list of debts, dated 1536, owing by Queen Anne Boleyn at her death, occurs the name of "Androw, paynter," for 29*s.* 4*d.*, which probably refers to Wright;[2] and on the 29th September 1539, his name, as the King's painter, appears in the Great Wardrobe accounts as one of the royal creditors.[3] Again, on the 17th July in that year (1539) he is mentioned in Thomas Cromwell's accounts as Andrew Wryte or Wryght, "for things done at my Lord's stallation," as Knight of the Garter, £21, 7*s.*;[4] while in May 1541 he is paid by warrant, out of the King's household expenses, £39, 6*s.* 8*d.* "for the painting of certain coats of arms for the heralds at arms."[5]

Wright died in the same year as Holbein, but a few months earlier, and his will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on the 29th May 1543. "He left estates at Stratford-le-Bow, at 'the Gleane' in the parish of St. Olave, Southwark, 'the Bottle' in Bermondsey, and at Cowden, in Kent, where he had a manufactory of 'pynck.' (Pink was a vegetable pigment, answering to the *giallo santo* of the Italians, and *stil-de-grain* of the French.) He desired to be buried, like his predecessor, Browne, in the church of St. Vedast, and requested his friend Garter (Christopher Barker) to be overseer of the will, a circumstance which testifies to his connection in business with the College of Heralds."[6] He left £40 and all his vessels and apparatus for the making of pink to his eldest son, Christopher, and £40 to the younger son, Richard, and £4 a year so long as he lived with his mother.

John Hethe, or Heath, another member of the Painter-Stainers' Company, one of the painters to whom John Browne's house was consigned, was also in the royal employment, and was very probably

[1] *C.L.P.*, v. 952.
[2] *C.L.P.*, x. 914.
[3] *C.L.P.*, xiv. Pt. ii. 238.
[4] *C.L.P.*, xiv. Pt. ii. 782 (p. 336).
[5] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 1489 (f. 188).
[6] J. Gough Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 27.

one of the men engaged at Nonsuch Palace.[1] His will is dated 1st August 1552, and in it he leaves to his elder son, Lancelot, " my frames, tentes, stoles, patrons, stones, mullers, with the necessaries belonging or appertaining to Payntour's crafte," and to his second son, Lawrence, " all my moldes and molded work that I served the Kinge withal," while to each of his apprentices he bequeathed 6*s.* 8*d.* and a grinding-stone, and to his Company 20*s.*, " to make them a recreation or banket ymmediatlye after my decease." [2] Among the list of the things which he wished to be left in his house so long as his wife dwelt there, he mentions " pictures in tables," which at first sight would seem to indicate that he occasionally painted pictures. It is more likely, however, that these were works by other artists, for, like his brother painter-stainers, he appears to have been chiefly a decorator and a maker of moulded and coloured work for house-fronts and royal residences such as Nonsuch and other more temporary purposes, such as masques and revels, and the ornamentation of buildings erected for particular occasions, which were pulled down when done with, while the moulded work was preserved for future use. The more valuable of these moulds were often kept in leather cases made on purpose for them.

Of far greater importance as artists, and more dangerous rivals to Holbein in his search for work in England, were the numerous Italians and Netherlanders at that time settled here, and, in most instances, attached to the Court. The most important group of painters of the latter nationality were the three members of the Hoorenbault, Hornebolt, or Hornebaud family, Gerard, Lucas, and Susanna. This family belonged to Ghent, and from the first years of the fifteenth century had been painters and masters of the Guild of St. Luke. The exact relationships of the three are not entirely clear. Walpole rolled the two men into one, and called him Gerard Luke Horneband.[3] Mr. Nichols [4] suggests that Luke was Gerard's elder brother, and that Susanna was their sister. Mr. Wornum [5] regarded Gerard as the father of the other two.

There are several Hoorenbaults named Lucas in the lists of the masters of the Ghent Guild—one in 1512, who was sub-dean in 1525 ; another who was admitted in 1533, and was sub-dean in 1539 ; and a

[1] See p. 276. [2] J. Gough Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 34.
[3] Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, ed. Wornum, 1888, p. 62.
[4] *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 30. [5] Wornum, p. 22.

third Lucas, the son of Lucas, admitted in 1534.[1] The name Gerard does not occur in the lists, but in the communal accounts for 1510–11, there are payments to Gheraerd Hurebaut, scildere, for painting a plan of part of the town of Ghent and its neighbourhood. He painted altar-pieces for the church of St. Bavon, designed vestments, and was employed as an illuminator of books by Margaret of Austria at Antwerp and Mechlin.[1] Albrecht Dürer met him at Antwerp in 1521, when on his journey through the Netherlands, and noted in his diary—"Item, Master Gerhart, Illuminator, has a young daughter, about eighteen years of age, her name is Susanna; she has made a coloured drawing of Our Saviour, for which I gave her a florin; it is wonderful that a woman should be able to do such a work."

This Gerard was married to Margaret Svanders, of Ghent, daughter of Derich Svanders and widow of Jan van Heerweghe.[1] She died at Fulham on 26th November 1529 in the house of her daughter Susanna, who was then the wife of John Parker, the King's bowman and a yeoman of the robes, as may be gathered from a brass plate with a Latin inscription in Fulham Church, in which her husband is spoken of as Gerard Hornebolt, the most noted painter of Ghent.[2] There is no evidence to show that it was this Gerard who came to England, and Mr. Cust's surmise is probably correct,[3] that the Lucas, Gerard, and Susanna who were employed at Henry's Court, were the children of Gerard and Margaret Hoorenbault. Luke was always in receipt of a higher salary than Gerard from the royal purse, his monthly wages being 55*s.* 6*d.*, whereas Gerard only received 33*s.* 4*d.* This would hardly have been the case had the latter been his father. Luke was probably the elder brother. The elder Gerard was dead in Ghent in 1540–1, when his son Joris was served as his heir. His wife Margaret seems to have been only in England on a visit to her daughter and son-in-law when she died at Fulham in 1529. The three Hornebolts, as their name was anglicised, appear to have arrived in England only a year or two before Holbein. The exact date of their entry into Henry's service cannot be ascertained, as, unfortunately, none of the royal household accounts prior to October 1528 have been preserved, and

[1] Lionel Cust, *Introductory Notes to the Catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of Early English Portraiture*, 1909, pp. 47, 48.

[2] See Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 29.

[3] Lionel Cust, *Introductory Notes, Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib. Early English Portraiture*, 1909, p. 48.

in that month both Luke and Gerard are entered as receiving the salaries mentioned above.

Both Vasari and Lodovico Guicciardini (1567) speak of Lucas Hurembout as a well-known illuminator of Ghent, and state that his sister Susanna was so renowned for similar work that she was induced to come to England by Henry VIII, where she was in great favour at the Court, and died here rich and honoured. Immerzeel in his *De Levens en Werken der Hollandsche en Vlaamsche Kunstschilders* (1842) says that she married an English sculptor named Whorstley, and died at Worcester, but upon what authority he based this statement is not known.

Luke Hornebolt received a grant of denization by patent dated 22nd June 1534, in which he is described as a native of Flanders, with licence to keep in his service four journeymen or covenant servants, born out of the King's dominions, notwithstanding the statute of 14 & 15 Henry VIII to the contrary. By a second patent of the same date he received a " grant of the office of King's painter, and of a tenement or messuage in the parish of St. Margaret in Westminster, an empty place on the east side of the same tenement, the south of which looks upon the hermitage of St. Katherine, and the north part on a tenement lately built by the Crown." [1] He died in London in May 1544 ; his will, which is dated 8th December 1543, was proved on 27th May 1544. He received his wages up to April in that year, but in May is entered as " Item, for Lewke Hornebaude, paynter, wages nil quia mortuus." In his will he calls himself Lucas Hornebolt, " servante and painter unto the Kinges majestie," and requests to be buried where it shall please his friends in the parish of St. Martins-in-the-Fields beside Charing Cross. He leaves his wife, Margaret, possibly an Englishwoman, and his daughter, Jacomyne, his executrices, with two-thirds of his property to the former and one-third to the latter. Richard Airell was appointed overseer of the will, and William Delahay and Robert Spenser were the witnesses.

Nothing is definitely known as to the paintings produced by these three artists in England, though it is very possible that certain of the numerous portraits of Henry VIII still in existence were painted by Luke and Gerard, and that some of the miniatures of him were from the brush of Susanna, all such paintings, in earlier days, being attri-

[1] *C.L.P.*, vii. 922 (14 and 15).

buted to Holbein. The portrait of Henry VIII in Warwick Castle, and similar versions in Kimbolton Castle, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and elsewhere, are now generally ascribed to one or other of the Hornebolts. The last-named version is dated 1544, so that Holbein could not have painted it. Another version, belonging to the Marquis of Bute, was said by Dr. Waagen, who saw it at Luton House, to be "exactly like the picture by Holbein at Warwick Castle, only less finished. If by Gerard Horebout, as stated here, it is a copy from Holbein."

The very fact that tradition attached the name of an almost unknown artist to this picture of the King, in the days when it was the fashion to regard every portrait of Henry VIII as a work of Holbein's, is sufficient to suggest that the tradition is in all probability the correct one. "When tradition," says Mr. Wornum, "notwithstanding the mischievous activity of presumptuous ignorance, has still handed down works with comparatively obscure names attached to them, the fact alone should go a great way towards its confirmation as truth." [1] Dr. Waagen, however, never hesitated to discard such attributions, and often saw Holbein in pictures which more modern criticism has shown could not have been from his brush.

Lucas is said to have given Holbein his first instructions in miniature-painting, and no doubt all three members of the family were miniaturists and illuminators, and were employed in producing the small portraits of the King and the members of his family so often required by Henry for sending abroad as gifts to other reigning monarchs or as presents to subjects whom he wished to honour. Thus, in the summer of 1527, the King sent, through his representative in Paris, portraits of himself and the Princess Mary to Francis I. Whether these were miniatures or not is uncertain, but upon the backs of them were painted various royal devices, which were explained to the French King, who "liked them singularly well, and at the first sight of Henry's 'phisonamye' took off his bonnet, saying he knew well that face, and further, 'Je prie Dieu que il luy done bone vie et longue.' He then looked at the Princess's, standing in contemplation and beholding thereof a great while, and gave much commendation and laud unto the same." [2] These two portraits may have been painted by one or other of the Hornebolts.

[1] Wornum, p. 32.

[2] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. ii. 3169.

More than one deed of the period, preserved in the Record Office, is ornamented with an initial letter containing a portrait of Henry VIII. Thus, on one confirming to Wolsey's College at Oxford all the possessions granted to them by the King, dated 5th May 1526, there is a fine miniature of Henry in the initial letter done by an artist of considerable ability.[1] Other deeds having reference to the Cardinal's College at Ipswich have the royal miniature and arms, as well as Wolsey's arms and insignia, beautifully tricked by some foreigner; and another, dealing with the same college, with a miniature of the King, the royal supporters, &c. &c., with an architectural column by the side of the initial letter, and an angel bearing the letters "H.R."[2] These are all of the year 1528, while another, dated 1st January 1529, is illuminated in the same way, and is equally well done.[3] In an account of Wolsey's for preparing these deeds for the college there is an item: "For vellum and making great letters for my Lord his patents, 13*s.*" Also "To Hert, for vellum, parchment and drawing of great letters, 39*s.* 2*d.*" The writing appears to have been chiefly done by Stephen Vaughan, for which he received £6, 17*s.* 9*d.*, and among the payments made to several people "for writing," there is mention of one "Gerarde," who was very possibly Gerard Hornebolt.[4] It is, therefore, not unlikely that Lucas and Gerard were responsible for the miniatures at the head of such deeds. Who "Hert" or Hart, was, who drew the "great letters," there is so far no evidence to show, but he was probably an Englishman.

The work of Lucas Hornebolt as a painter of portrait-miniatures, and his almost certain identity with the "Master Lukas" who first instructed Holbein in this branch of art, is dealt with in a later chapter. In April 1532 he received the grant of a royal licence to export 400 quarters of barley, in which he is called "Luke Hornebolt, a native of Flanders;"[5] and in 1536–7 (28 Hen. VIII), in connection with some revels and masques at Hampton Court, occurs the item, "To Lucas Horneholte, painter, for painting with black upon paper, of 3 bulls and 3 small rolls, 5*s.*"[6] Among the presents received by the King on New Year's Day, 1539, was a fire-screen from Lucas Hornebolt, which is entered in the royal accounts thus: "By Lewcas

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. i. 2152.
[2] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. ii. 4435, 4572, 4574–77, 4652.
[3] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. iii. 5163.
[4] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. ii. 5117.
[5] *C.L.P.*, v. 978 (15).
[6] *Loseley Manuscripts.*

paynter a skrene to set afore the fyre, standing uppon a fote of woode, and the skrene blewe worsted." [1] He was given in return a gilt cruse weighing 10½ oz., and his servant who delivered it 6*s.* 8*d.*, Holbein and Antonio Toto receiving similar presents at the same time.

Gerard Hornebolt's service in the royal household was of shorter duration than Luke's. Up to May 1531 his name always occurs in the treasurer's accounts in conjunction with his brother, but there is a break in the records from that date until Lady Day 1538, the household books for that period having disappeared, and from October 1538 Luke's name alone appears. His death is not recorded, as it was the custom to do when salaries were concerned, by some such entry as " wages nihil quia mortuus," as was done in the case of his brother Luke in 1544 ; so that it is probable that he returned to Ghent at some date between 1531 and 1538, leaving his brother and sister permanently settled in England. In this connection it is interesting to note that in a list of payments made by Sir Richard Wingfield in Calais between the 8th January 1513 and the 21st November 1514, there is an entry of £33, 6*s.* 8*d.* paid to " the glazier of Antwerp (possibly Galyon Hone) for glazing the great east window in St. Nicholas' Church, Calais, by the King's command," and that 25*s.* was paid " to a painter of Gaunt for taking the portraiture of the King's visage to be set in the said window." [2] The name of the elder Gerard may be suggested as the artist employed for this purpose, as one of the leading painters of Ghent. It does not follow from the entry that the drawing was supplied by some painter then settled in England, while the small fee paid almost precludes the possibility that an artist was sent over specially from Calais to London to sketch the King ; but Gerard Hoorenbault appears to have been resident in Antwerp at about that time (1513), and the commission may have been given him by the Antwerp glazier who was carrying out the work.

In addition to Susanna Hornebolt, two other skilled Netherlandish miniaturists of her sex came over to England during the later years of Henry VIII's reign. What little is known of Livina Teerlinc, or Terling, as she was called in this country, is given in a later chapter.[3] Nothing is known about the second miniaturist, Katherine Maynor or Maynors, except that she received a patent of denization in Novem-

[1] *C.L.P.*, xiii. Pt. ii. 1280, f. 55 *b*. [2] *C.L.P.*, i. 5604. [3] See Vol. ii. pp. 238–9.

ber 1540, in which she is described as a " widow, painter, born at Antwerp in Brabant." [1] She may, perhaps, have been some relation of Henry Maynert, painter, one of the witnesses to Holbein's will; or even the widow of the John Maynard who, with John Bell, was employed upon the painting of Henry VII's tomb.

Another notable painter from the Low Countries who was a contemporary of Holbein's in England, was Johannes Corvus, of Flanders, whose style of painting can be judged by two well-authenticated portraits—that of Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of which college he was the founder; and that of Princess Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and widow of Louis XII, painted in 1532, when she was the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, which was lent to the Exhibition of Early English Portraiture at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1909 by Mr. H. Dent-Brocklehurst (No. 28). A similar manner of painting is to be found in a series of portraits of Princess Mary Tudor, afterwards Queen, including the one in the National Portrait Gallery, dated 1544, which is attributed to Corvus in the catalogue. This picture has much resemblance to a portrait of a Tudor princess, possibly Queen Elizabeth, belonging to Mrs. Booth, of Glendon Hall,[2] which has always borne the traditional name of Katherine Parr. To this group may be added the portrait of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, in the National Portrait Gallery.[3] If the portraits of Queen Mary are by Corvus, he may be identified with some certainty as the " one John that drue her Grace in a table," for which he received £5 in 1544, as noted in the Princess Mary's Privy Purse Expenses.

" Corvus," says Mr. Cust, " may be safely identified with one Jan Raf, or Rave, who was admitted to the Guild of Painters at Bruges in 1512, and with the " Jehan Raf, painctre de Flandres," who in 1532 painted for Francis I " une carte ou est figuré les villes et pays d'Angleterre," and in 1534, " ung pourtraict de la ville de Londres dont il a ci-devant fait présent au dict Seigneur." These entries show that Jehan Raf was sent to England from France, possibly more than once. The fact that no portraits are attributed to him in England between 1532 and 1544 may be accounted for by his return to France during the supremacy of Holbein, after whose

[1] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 305 (25).
[2] Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib., 1909, No. 29.
[3] Lionel Cust, *Introductory Notes, Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib. Catg.*, 1, 1909, pp. 45, 46.

death he found an opportunity of establishing himself at the English Court." [1]

With regard to Guillim Stretes, the Dutchman, Gerlach Fliccius, or Garlicke, as he is termed in the inventory of the pictures in Lumley Castle made in 1590, and the clever painter who used the monogram H.E., whose true identity as one Hans Eworthe or Eewouts has been recently discovered by Mr. Lionel Cust by means of the same inventory,[2] as no works of theirs have been so far discovered in this country having a date prior to that of Holbein's death in 1543, consideration of them is reserved until a later chapter dealing with Holbein's successors.

Among the foreign painters and sculptors who found employment in England under Henry VIII, the Italians were by far the most numerous, though the inducements offered were not sufficiently alluring to artists of the highest rank, such as were to be found from time to time at the French Court. Many of them, no doubt, were brought over by the various merchant representatives of the leading Italian business houses, such as the Bardi, the Cavalcanti, the Corsi, the Frescobaldi, and others. Italian workmen were frequently employed upon buildings, more particularly in the south-east of England, where Italian handiwork and influences can be easily observed, as at Hampton Court, Sutton Place, Layer Marney, East Bursham, and elsewhere, both in the use of terra-cotta, plaster-work in ceilings and friezes, arabesque work in mullions and mouldings, and in other directions. On more than one house the stone figures and carvings were the work of master workmen brought over from Italy, while the few good Tuscan sculptors employed by Henry VIII exercised considerable influence upon the English craftsmen with whom they worked—an influence which did not immediately die away upon their departure.

The first Italians to come over were chiefly sculptors and makers of ornaments, workers in marble and alabaster and plaster. The few painters who accompanied them were of much the same type as their English contemporaries, decorators of houses, and makers of heraldic designs, colourers of sculpture and painters of banners and badges, though probably more skilful than the English, and capable on occasion of painting a picture.

The first of the sculptors employed was Guido Mazzoni, or Paganino,

[1] See also Scharf, *Archæologia*, xxxix. pp. 47–9.

[2] See *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xiv., March 1909, pp. 366–8.

of Modena, known here as Master Pageny, who was entrusted with the task of designing and erecting the tomb of Henry VII and his wife, for which that monarch had left very elaborate instructions. Paganino was chosen, no doubt, on account of the fame of his tomb of Charles VIII at St. Denis.[1] His design, however, was not to Henry VIII's liking, so that the commission was taken from him and given to Pietro Torrigiano of Florence. In an estimate for the making of this tomb drawn up in 1509, the names of the several artificers it was proposed to employ are given.[2] Among them were Humphrey Walker, the founder, Nicholas Ewen, the coppersmith and gilder, John Bell and John Maynard, the painters, and Robert Vertue, Robert Jenyns, and John Lobons, the King's three master masons. In it Paganino is termed "Master Pageny." Several of these men were employed on the tomb later on under Torrigiano's directions.

Pietro Torrigiano, born in Florence in 1472, studied as a young man in the academy founded by the elder Lorenzo de' Medici, under Bertholdo, where he broke Michelangelo's nose in a quarrel, and was forced to fly to Rome. There he was employed by Pope Alexander VI on stucco-work in the Vatican. After an interlude spent in soldiering he returned to art, and occupied himself in making small figures in bronze and marble, which, together with numerous drawings and designs, he sold to Florentine merchants, who probably sent some of them over to their representatives in London. In a cause tried before the Council at the Palace of Greenwich in 1518 between Pietro di Bardi and Bernardo Cavalcanti, Torrigiano appeared as a witness, which shows that he was closely connected with them, and it was, no doubt, upon their recommendations that he was persuaded to come to England, possibly for the very purpose of designing Henry VII's tomb.[3] Vasari says that in England "did Torrigiano receive so many rewards, and was so largely remunerated that, had he not been a most violent, reckless, and ill-conducted person, he might there have lived a life of ease, and brought his days to a quiet close."

The work on the tomb was begun in 1512, the date of the indenture between Torrigiano and the King being 26th October of that year. He appears to have been resident in the precinct of St. Peter's,

[1] See Cust, *Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 60. [2] *C.L.P.*, i. 775.

[3] See M. Digby Wyatt, "On the Foreign Artists employed in England during the Sixteenth Century," *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1868, p. 220.

Westminster, for some time before that date, making preparations and engaging workmen, and also working on the beautiful monument to the Lady Margaret Beaufort, Henry VII's mother, who was buried in the Abbey on the 30th June 1509. Other works of his in England include the fine monument to Dr. John Younge, Master of the Rolls, in the Rolls Chapel, erected about 1516–7, and perhaps the monument to Sir Thomas Lovell in the priory of Holywell in Shoreditch. In such works as these Torrigiano reached a very high pitch of excellence.

The tomb of Henry VII was finished in 1518, and so delighted Henry VIII, that he at once commissioned the Italian to design one for himself and Queen Katherine, of white marble and black touchstone, which was to be one-fourth larger than the one just finished, and not to cost more than £2000. It was to be placed in a separate chapel, adorned with frescoes, and Torrigiano returned to Italy to engage competent workmen and artists to assist him. "Benvenuto Cellini narrates that when he was about eighteen years old, there came to Florence a sculptor named Piero Torrigiani, who arrived from England, where he had resided many years. Happening to see Cellini's drawings, Torrigiano told him that he had come to Florence to enlist as many young men as he could, for he had undertaken a great work for the King, and wanted some of his own Florentines to help him. As the work included a great piece of bronze, he thought that Cellini would be useful for that purpose. Cellini, who did not accept the offer, remarks on Torrigiano's splendid person and most arrogant spirit, and how he talked every day about his gallant feats among those beasts of Englishmen." [1]

Torrigiano returned to England in 1519 or 1520, bringing several Italian artists with him, but for some reason—possibly a dispute—his contract for Henry VIII's tomb was never carried out. He thereupon left England for Spain, where he is said to have gained a great reputation, but, quarrelling with the Duke d'Arcos, to whom he had sold a statue of the Virgin, he broke it to pieces with a hammer. This brought him within the clutches of the Inquisition, and he is said, according to legend, to have starved himself to death in prison in Seville in 1522, through rage and grief. This story, however, appears to be largely imaginary.

For the work on Henry VIII's tomb in England he had enlisted

[1] Cust, *Catg. Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition*, 1909, p. 61.

the services of a young painter called Antonio Toto del Nunziata, of Florence, who, together with one Antonio di Piergiovanni di Lorenzo, sculptor, of Settignano, made a contract with Torrigiano in September 1519, to work with him for four and a half years in France, Italy, Flanders, England, Germany, or any other part of the world.[1] Toto either stayed behind in London when his master went to Spain, or returned to England from that country on Torrigiano's death, and remained in the King's service for many years; but there is no record to show what became of Antonio di Lorenzo. Before giving a short account of Toto, a few words must be said of the Neapolitan, Vincent Volpe, who appears to have been the first of the Italian painters regularly employed by Henry VIII. Much of the work he undertook was of a decorative character, of the same nature as that carried out by John Browne, Andrew Wright, and other members of the Painter-Stainers' Company.

Volpe was often engaged upon work for the royal navy. The first reference to him in the State Papers occurs in the year 1512, in an account for the painting of ships' banners. Among the payments made was one "to Mr. Domynyke Cyny, clerk, in reward for the use of Vincence of Naples and Alexe of Myllen, painters, £6, 13*s.* 4*d.*"[2] In April 1514 he was at work with John Browne and others on the royal ship *Henry Grace à Dieu*, for which "Vincent Vulp, painter, by the King's command," painted and made various streamers and banners, one with a dragon, one with a lion, one with a greyhound, and so on.[3] In June of the previous year he received £30 for similar work for seven ships, his name being entered in the King's Book of Payments as Vincent Woulpe.[4]

In June 1516, as Vincent Volpe, he appears to be definitely in the King's service, with a salary of £20 a year, paid quarterly.[5] Early in 1518, his name occurs in some accounts as Vincent, the King's painter. He was sent to Antwerp apparently in connection with glass designs for windows for the church or some building in Calais.[6] In 1520 he was employed at Guisnes with John Browne and others in the decoration of the temporary buildings erected for the Field of the Cloth of Gold.[7] He received £40 for work done or purchases made in

[1] Cust, p. 61.
[2] *C.L.P.*, i. 5720.
[3] *C.L.P.*, i. 4954.
[4] *C.L.P.*, ii. Pt. ii. p. 1461.
[5] *C.L.P.*, ii. Pt. ii. p. 1472.
[6] *C.L.P.*, ii. Pt. ii. 3862.
[7] *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. i. 826. See p. 259.

Antwerp, and twenty crowns (£4, 6*s.* 2*d.*) for his costs in going there. There is some uncertainty, however, about the date of these two last accounts, and both may refer to the same journey. In May 1524 he was employed in connection with the funeral of Sir Thomas Lovell, K.G., to make twenty-four small escutcheons in metal, "with my master's arms in the garter, to be set on the altars at the interment," for which he received 15*s.* For the same funeral, one John Wolffe, painter, was employed for providing stuff, £33, 3*s.*[1] The name Wolffe occurs more than once in connection with painting ships. Very possibly Vincent Volpe is intended, or this John may have been a relation.

Volpe was also one of the many artists engaged in the decoration of the Banqueting House at Greenwich for the reception of the French envoys in 1527, dealt with in Chapter xiv., upon which Holbein also was employed. He appears, together with John Browne, to have provided various materials and also to have done some of the painting, for which he received a weekly wage, the entry running, "To Italian painters, Vincent Vulp and Ellys Carmyan at 20*s.* the week."[2] In the treasurer's accounts for quarter's wages due at Christmas 1528 he is entered as receiving 50*s.* a quarter, but this is apparently a mistake in transcribing, for as early as 1516 he was getting a salary of £20 a year, and in September 1529, the larger amount is again entered against his name, to be paid quarterly. In May 1530 he received £15, 4*s.* 9*d.* for trimming the King's new barge, and in December of the same year £3, 10*s.* "for paynting of a plat of Rye and Hastings"[3] —evidently a bird's-eye view showing the fortifications and defences, such as were frequently made for the King. On New Year's Day, 1532, he presented the King with two long and two round targets.[4] He appears to have died or to have left the country shortly after this. Mr. Nichols suggests that it is "by no means improbable that Vincent Volpe may have been the painter of some of those curious military pictures, something between plans and bird's-eye views, that are still to be seen on the walls of Hampton Court"—the large painting of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," the "Embarkation of Henry VIII from Dover,"[5] and others.

In the entry respecting Volpe quoted above, in connection with

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. i. 366.
[2] *C.L.P.*, iv. Pt. ii. 3104.
[3] *C.L.P.*, v., Privy Purse Expenses.
[4] *C.L.P.*, v. 686.
[5] *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 28.

the Banqueting House at Greenwich in 1527, he is coupled with another Italian painter, "Ellys Carmyan." The latter, who was in receipt of a regular salary from the King, it has been customary to regard as a woman, because the Christian name is entered in the accounts more than once as Alice. Thus in December 1528,[1] the entry for quarter's wages is "Alice Carmillion, painter, 33*s.* 4*d.*" The writer, however, is of opinion that Carmillian was a man. At other times the name is given as Alys, Ellys, Alye, and other variations, and the surname is spelt Carmillion or Carmillian. This artist is more often described as a "millyner" than as a painter. The payment quoted above immediately precedes that of Volpe in the accounts, and the two painters were usually employed together at this period. In the payments for ships' banners in 1511,[2] Volpe is joined with one Alexe of Myllen, painter. This Alessandro of Milan is evidently the same person as Ellys or Alys Carmillian; the change from Alexe to Alys is an easy one, and Bryan Tuke's spelling of foreign names in his accounts is characterised by remarkable variety. It is not likely that a woman would be employed upon such work as the painting of a building; and the term "millyner" occurs much more frequently in recording payments to men than to women in the royal accounts. Mr. Digby Wyatt suggests that the name was Elisa Carmillione, Milanesa, and that she was a Milanese miniaturist.[3] It has been suggested, too, that this painter was a relative of Peter Carmeliano, of Brescia, the poet, Latin secretary to Henry VII and one of the King's chaplains, who became lute player to Henry VIII.[4]

Carmillian was one of those who supplied materials for the work carried out at Westminster Palace in 1532. One of the entries in connection with this runs: "To Elys Carmenelle, of London, painter, for 200 Flemish paving tiles, 30*s.*"[5] On New Year's Day 1529 he, or rather his servant, received a reward of 10*s.* in return for his gift to the King.[6] Carmillian's salary was only £6, 13*s.* 4*d.* a year, paid quarterly.[7]

[1] *C.L.P.*, v., Treasurer of the Chamber's Accounts, p. 305. [2] See above, p. 273.

[3] *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, p. 227.

[4] Lewis Einstein, *The Italian Renaissance in England*, 1902, p. 196, and Cust, *Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 64.

[5] *C.L.P.*, v. 952 (p. 446). [6] *C.L.P.*, v., Treasurer of the Chamber's Accounts, p. 307.

[7] Mr. Cust gives his salary as £20 per annum, but the entry in the accounts is always 33*s.* 4*d.* a quarter, not a month, though this, of course, may be an error of book-keeping.

Antonio Toto, who, as already noted, was brought over to England by Torrigiano, was an artist of greater capabilities than Volpe and Carmillian. He spent nearly forty years in England, and throughout the whole of the time appears to have been in the royal service. He usually worked in conjunction with another Italian painter, Bartolommeo Penni, their names almost always appearing together in the Household Accounts. Toto was the son of one Toto dell' Nunziata, a painter of Florence of some standing, a maker of "puppets," and a great practical joker, as Vasari relates. The son was a fellow-pupil with Perino del Vaga in Ridolfo Ghirlandajo's studio. Toto took part with his master in painting a Madonna and Child in the church of San Pietro Scheraggio, a building no longer in existence. Vasari says that he was taken to England by some Florentine merchants, and there executed all his works, "and by the King of that province, for whom he wrought in architecture (as well as in sculpture and painting), and for whom he built his principal palace, was most handsomely rewarded."

The "principal palace" referred to by Vasari was evidently Nonsuch, near Cheam, in Surrey, which was begun in 1538 by Henry VIII, who acquired the site, previously called Cuddington, in that year. The original and principal structure was of two storeys, the lower being of substantial and well-wrought freestone, and the upper of wood, "richly adorned and set forth, and garnished with a variety of statues, pictures (*i.e.* coloured figures in relief), and other artistic forms of excellent art and workmanship, and of no small cost"—it is thus described in the survey of the Parliamentary Commissioners in 1650.[1] This singular building remained in good condition for more than a century, and was described by both Evelyn and Pepys in 1665. The former says that the plaster statues and basso-relievos "must needs have been the work of some celebrated Italian." Pepys speaks of the same features as "figures of stories and good painting of Rubens or Holbein's doing." In the earliest account of it, published in Braun's *Urbium Præcipuarum Mundi Theatrum Quintium*, in 1583, it is stated that Henry VIII "procured many excellent artificers, architects, sculptors, and statuaries, as well Italians, French, and Dutch as natives, who all applied to the ornament of this mansion the finest and most curious skill they possessed in their several arts, embellishing it within

[1] See M. Digby Wyatt, *Transactions*, &c., p. 225.

and without with magnificent statues, some of which vividly represent the antiquities of Rome and some surpass them." A view of the palace by Joris Hoefnagel accompanied this account, which gives an excellent idea of the building before the additions were made to it by Lord Lumley.

If Vasari is to be believed, Toto was the chief architect of this building; in any case, it may be taken for granted that he was one of the leading Italians employed there. In the royal accounts he is always spoken of as "paynter," but the term included the makers of works in coloured plaster, with which the exterior of Nonsuch was covered. "Toto's earliest education," says Mr. Digby Wyatt, "had specially fitted him for dealing with such an infinity of allegorical and quasi-pictorial sculpture as that with which we shall find Nonsuch to have been adorned; since his father, in whose 'bottega' he was first brought up, obtained his nickname of 'Nunziata' from his annually furnishing all the quantity of imagery with which the feast of the Annunciation was wont to be set forth in a tangible shape at Florence." [1]

"Antony Toto and Barthilmewe Penne" first appear in the Household Accounts in 1530, "upon several warrantes being dated the iiijth day of June, anno xxij, for their wages, after the rate of xxv *li* a year to every of them, to be paid unto them quarterly, & during the Kinges pleasure." [2] Thus each received £25 a year, the payment for the two being always entered in one account, £12, 10*s*. each quarter, and 22*s*. 6*d*. each annually for their livery coats. On one occasion the scribe has confused them, and has entered them as "Anthony Pene and Bartilmew Tate." [3] There are some interesting items concerning Toto in the Hampton Court Accounts,[4] from which we learn that in addition to his work as an architect and decorator he was employed as a painter of pictures. Thus, in 1530, there is an entry: "To Antonye Tote, painter, for the painting of five tables standing in the King's library—First, one table of Joachim and St. Anne. Item, another table, how Adam delved in the ground. Item, the third table, how Adam was droven out of Paradise. Item, the fourth table,

[1] *Transactions*, &c., p. 225. [2] *C.L.P.*, v., Treasurer of the Chamber's Accounts, p. 319.
[3] *C.L.P.*, v., Privy Purse Expenses, March 1531. "To Anthony Pene and Bartilmew Tate, paynters, for ther lyveray at 22*s*. 6*d*. a pece, 45*s*."
[4] Vol. c. 6, 12. Quoted by Wornum, p. 204, note.

of the burying of our Lord. Item, the fifth table, being the last table, of the burying of our blessed Lady. The said Antonye taking for the said five tables, by a bargain in great, £6, 13*s.* 4*d.*" Toto was also a restorer of old pictures, for on the same page is the following: "Item, to the said Antonye for sundry colours by him employed and spent upon the old painted tables in the King's privy closet, 13*s* 4*d.*"; and again, "also paid to Antoyne Tote, painter, for the painting of four great tables—that is to say, one table of our [Lady] of Pity; another table of the four Evangelists; the third of the Maundythe [the feet-washing on Maundy Thursday?]. The fourth [title omitted]. The said Antonye taking for the said tables, by a bargain with him made, by great, 20*l.* soll." These entries show that painters at Henry's Court received separate payment for pictures and other special works, and that their salaries were in the nature of retaining fees. They also received a daily wage when engaged on work of some duration, as can be gathered from several quotations from the accounts already given. In 1530 Toto was engaged in this way at one shilling a day, and with him were associated Philyp Arkeman (10*d.*), Lewes Williams (9*d.*), and John Devynk (3*d.*). The work consisted of "new painting and gilding certain antique heads brought from Greenwich to Hanworth at the King's commandment, and new garnishing of the same." In June 1532 he was employed upon a similar job: "Also paid to Anthony Tote and John De la Mayn, the King's painters, for their wages, coming from London to Hanworth for to see the finishing and setting up of certain antique heads new painted and gilded, either of them by the space of three days at xii*d.* the day, for themselves and their horses."[1] These were the terra-cotta roundels modelled by Giovanni da Maiano, the John De la Mayn of the accounts, which appear to have been painted and gilded by Toto.

On 15th January 1532 he received a special sum of £20 by the King's commandment, for some service not mentioned.[2] He became a naturalised Englishman in 1538, his patent of denization being dated 26th June in that year. In it he is described as a native of Florence, in the Emperor's dominions.[3] In the same year he was employed by Cromwell on some work at Havering, for which he was paid 51*s.* 1*d.* on 26th May.[4] On the 28th November 1538 he and his wife Helen

[1] *Hampton Court Accounts*, Wornum, p. 205, note.
[2] *C.L.P.*, v., Privy Purse Expenses.
[3] *C.L.P.*, xiii. Pt. i. 1309 (35).
[4] *C.L.P.*, xiv. Pt. ii. 782 (p. 335).

received a grant in survivorship of two cottages and land in Mycheham (Mitcham), near Nonsuch, which was to be held by payment of a red rose at St. John Baptist's Day annually.[1] On the following New Year's Day he presented the King with a " depicted table of Calomia " (the Calumny of Apelles) [2]; and on the 1st of January 1541 a " table of the story of King Alexander." [3] On the 14th of April 1541 he obtained a licence to import 600 tuns of beer,[4] and on the 2nd December 1542 he received a lease of the manor of Ravesbury, in Surrey, which belonged to Sir Nicholas Carew, attainted, for forty years, at £42, 6*s.* 8*d.* rental.[5]

Toto succeeded Andrew Wright as the King's serjeant-painter in 1543, and he continued to hold the same position throughout the reign of Edward VI, and in that capacity he provided the tabards for the heralds, and at the coronation of Edward furnished all materials required by the College, whether in satin, damask, or sarcenet, for Kings, Heralds, and Pursuivants. He also devised patterns and painted the properties for the court masques. Thus, at Shrovetide 1548, he received 20*s.* as a reward for his pains in drawing patrons (patterns) for the masks, and a similar amount a year or two later for attending the Revels and drawing and devising for painters and others. In 1550 he supplied " antique moulded heads " for a temporary banqueting house, and in 1552 he was employed in preparing properties for a masque on the State of Ireland, and received 4*s.* for painting an Irish halberd, sword, and dagger, and a coat and cap with eyes, tongues, and ears for Fame.[6] On New Year's Day 1552 he presented King Edward with " the phismanye of the Duke of —— (name obliterated), steyned upon cloth of silver, in a frame of woode," for which he received in return a gilt salt with cover weighing a little over nine ounces. He was still serjeant-painter at the death of Edward VI, and for the King's funeral had an allowance of seven yards of black cloth, with three more for his servant.[7] It is to be supposed that the numerous pictures Toto presented to Henry VIII and his son were of his own painting, though there is no actual proof of this; his chief works in England appear to have been architectural and decorative.

[1] *C.L.P.*, xiii. Pt. ii. 967 (46).
[2] *C.L.P.*, xiii. Pt. ii. 1280 (f. 53*b*).
[3] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 1489 (f. 165).
[4] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 779 (18).
[5] *C.L.P.*, xvii. 1251 (13).
[6] *Loseley Manuscripts*, edit. Kempe, pp. 81, 84, 89.
[7] *Archæologia*, xii. pp. 381, 391.

His fellow-worker, Bartolommeo Penni, another Florentine, may possibly have come with him to England in 1519. He was, in any case, settled in London and in the service of the King in the summer of 1522, for in a valuation of the lands and goods of the inhabitants of London of that date, he is entered in the parish of St. Martin Orgar as "Bartholomew Penny, stranger, in fees of the King yearly, £25."[1] Penni may possibly have been a brother of Gian Francesco Penni, called Il Fattore, one of Raphael's pupils, and of Luca Penni.[2] The latter was at work for some years at Fontainebleau under Rosso, and, according to Vasari, afterwards repaired to England; but there appears to be no foundation for this statement, Vasari having probably confused him with Bartolommeo.[3] In the royal accounts his name is always coupled with that of Toto when his quarterly salary is paid, but otherwise there is no record of him, except his patent of denization, dated 2nd October 1541, in which he is described as a subject of the Duke of Florence.[4] For some reason Penni did not sue for the letters patent for more than a year later, when the King's style and great seal had been altered, so that by the Lord Chancellor's command they were not to bear date until the 28th January 1543, and a fine of 13*s.* 4*d.* was inflicted. Beyond this, nothing is known about him, but the work he undertook for the Crown must have been of a similar nature to that done by Toto.

Two Florentine sculptors of note, Benedetto da Rovezzano and Giovanni da Maiano, were at work here throughout the whole of Holbein's sojourn in England. It is probable that they were brought over by Wolsey on purpose to work on the great tomb and monument he was erecting for himself in the tomb-house at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and after Wolsey's fall, when Henry VIII seized upon the materials and such of the work as had been finished and proceeded to adapt it for a tomb of his own, the two sculptors were retained in the King's service, though Benedetto, at least, was anxious to return to Florence before Wolsey's downfall. Their names occur constantly in the royal accounts. Rovezzano is sometimes entered as "Benedict, the King's tomb-maker." Giovanni da Maiano was a noted worker

[1] *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. ii. 2486.

[2] See J. Gough Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 38: and Cust, *Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 63.

[3] See Dimier, *French Painting in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 115, 116.

[4] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 1308 (4).

in terra-cotta, and Wolsey employed him on such work at Hampton Court. On the 18th June 1521 he rendered an account to Wolsey for ten roundels of terra-cotta (*rotundæ imagines ex terra depictæ*) at £2, 6*s.* 8*d.* each, and three histories of Hercules at £4 each, "for the Palace at Anton Cort." [1] These were the roundels already spoken of in connection with Toto. Maiano was one of the artists associated with Holbein in the decoration of the Greenwich Banqueting House, in the accounts of which he is entered as John Demyans. He was in the royal service, and received a salary of £20, being entered in October 1528 as "John Demayns, gravour." [2] In 1526 his name occurs in the accounts of Thomas, Lord Rocheford. "To Mane, the painter, for making the pattern of your seal of arms, 3*s.* 4*d.*," and it was as a seal-engraver that he was largely engaged at the Court. In Cromwell's accounts the two sculptors are sometimes entered as Benedict Rovesham or Rovesame and John de Manion or Manino. Their work on Henry's tomb appears to have gone on until 1536, when the project was abandoned for a time. Both men seem to have left England shortly afterwards.

Nicolas Bellin of Modena was one of the most prominent of the Italian artists engaged at the English Court during the latter half of Holbein's residence in England. Mr. Lionel Cust [3] suggests that "the similarity of name would lead to a possible identification of this Niccolo with Niccolo dell' Abbate da Modena, who arrived in France after the accession of Henri II, and took an important share in the decorative paintings at Fontainebleau, where he died in 1571"; but the latter, who, as a painter, was by far the more important artist of the two, did not reach France from Italy until 1552, whereas Bellin had been in the employment of Francis I as early as 1517.[4]

Bellin was a designer and worker in plaster. He is called in the English accounts both "carver" and "moulder," as well as "paynter." His name appears in the French royal accounts between 1517 and 1533, and M. Dimier infers from lack of any later reference to his name, that he died shortly after the latter date; but he had, in reality, moved over to England. He took a considerable share in the decoration of Fontainebleau, where he worked under Primaticcio, and

[1] *C.L.P.*, iii. Pt. i. 1355. [2] *C.L.P.*, v., Treasurer of the Chamber's Accounts, p. 305.
[3] *Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 65.
[4] See Dimier, *French Painting in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 60, 86. Also the same writer's *Le Primatice*, 1900. The name was sometimes spelt Belin.

perhaps under Rosso, upon the ornamental borders and decorations in plaster and stucco with which the various wall paintings were surrounded. "All visitors to Fontainebleau," says M. Dimier,[1] "carry away a recollection of the extraordinary mixture of painting and sculptured ornament displayed in the gallery. The high relief and the abundance of the stucco, which hems in the pictures on all sides and in places even overlaps their edges, make a unique and inspiring effect, in which the balance of the two arts would have been disturbed if Rosso had not scattered among the stuccos little cartouches of painting and placed grounds of gold behind them charged with paintings in varied colours." This was the kind of work upon which Bellin was employed in France, as can be gathered from the following entry in the "Account of Nicolas Picart," which was lot 466 in the sale of the late Sir Thomas Phillips' collections, 1903: "A Nicolas Bellin dit Modène, painctre, la somme de cent livres tournois. . . . pour cinq mois entiers qu'il avoit vacqué et besongné avec Francisque de Primadicis dit de Boullongne, aussi painctre, es ouvraiges de stucq et paincture encommancez à faire pour le roy nostre dit seigneur, en sa chambre de la grosse tour de son chasteau au dit Fontainebleau, à 20 livres par mois." [2]

By 1538 he was already in the service of the King of England, for in December in that year he received a quarter's wages, on a warrant dated on the previous 21st April, at the rate of £10 a year, and 20*s*. a year for his livery.[3] He is styled Nic. (Nicolas) de Modecio, but in the following March (1539) he appears as Nicholas de Modena.[4] Bellin did not come to England entirely of his own free will. He was, in fact, obliged to fly from France, and the King and his ministers made every effort to get him back again. Francis I wrote to Marillac, his ambassador in London, on 10th September 1540,[5] drawing his attention to the fact that some time earlier he had demanded "a subject and servant named Modena, who should be confronted with the president Gentils (also spelt Gentilz and Jentill) upon certain malversions he had made, but he has not been sent," and Marillac is ordered to make lively remonstrances thereupon. From the ambassador's reply,[6] of a week later, it is to be gathered that Modena, who is described as

[1] p. 75.
[2] Quoted in *Burlington Gazette*, II. i. May 1903, p. 55.
[3] *C.L.P.*, xiii., Pt. ii. 1280 (f. 47b).
[4] *C.L.P.*, xiv. Pt. ii. 781 (f. 68).
[5] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 37.
[6] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 59.

one of the accomplices of the President Gentilz, had been delivered by Henry's Council, in the spring of 1538, to the Bishop of Tarbes, then representing Francis in London, but had not been permitted to be sent to France, "as he was a native of Italy, although of Milan, which, they knew, belonged to Francis." Marillac is afraid that the same reasons will again be alleged against his extradition, and in writing to Montmorency, the Grand Constable, on the same date,[1] says that he will make representations to the King's Council touching Modena, "about whom they are sure to make difficulty, as he is an Italian." Sir John Wallop, the English ambassador to France, also wrote about the matter to Henry VIII, informing him that Modena was wanted "about an account of 100,000 crowns of which President Jentill beguiled the King."[2] Henry in his answer said, "as for Modena, he (Francis) never demanded him as a traitor according to the treaty, yet Henry gave him up to the French ambassador (the Bishop of Tarbes) at his request, and the latter afterwards put him at liberty."[3] The Council wrote to the same effect, saying, "the King is not bound to deliver him, as he is not a French subject, but born in the duchy of Milan, being in the Emperor's hands. And the King said that when the French King should be Duke of Milan he would be ready to observe the treaties."[4] In a final letter to Francis on 21st October 1540, Marillac calls Modena a "painter and sculptor," and says that "the King said he would not speak of Modena until justice had been done in his own case" (*i.e.* the detention in France of Blanche Rose).[5] A further interesting reference to Modena is to be found in a long letter from Wallop to Henry VIII, written from Melun on 17th November 1540, in which he describes a visit to Fontainebleau and an interview with Francis.[6] The letter also shows how keen an interest the two kings took in one another's building operations, and their willingness to assist one another with materials and designs. Francis asked Wallop many questions about Hampton Court, and said that he had heard that Henry used much gilding in his houses, especially in the roofs, but for his part he preferred natural wood, "as ebony, brasell, &c., which was more durable; he would show me Fontainebleau, especially his gallery there. He has found mines of marble nigh the sea-side, white at Marguyson, and black at

[1] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 60. [2] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 82. [3] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 115.
[4] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 163, 168. [5] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 182. [6] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 276. See also Appendix (H).

Sherbroke (Cherbourg), and you might have some for nothing if you liked to send for it; also divers moulds of antique personnages that he hath now coming out of Italy, with which he shall have done within three or four months." Wallop then describes a visit to "Fountayne de Bleawe" on the following Sunday, when the King showed him the "antycall borders" in his bedchamber, helping him to mount a bench that was too high for him, in order that he might examine them more closely. Francis afterwards showed him the Gallery, which Wallop describes, and refers Henry to "*Modon, who wrought there at the beginning*," for details. One side of the gallery, he says, "is all antique of suche stuff as the said Modon makith your Majesties chemenyes." [1] Such things, he adds, would suit the gallery at St. James's, and the French King would gladly give the pattern.

By a warrant of 14th January 1540 [2] the wages of "Nicholas de Modeno" were increased to £20 a year, and on 3rd October 1541 he received a patent of denization, with licence to have two apprentices and four journeymen or "covenant servants," in which he is described as "Nic. Bellin, a native of the city of Modena, in Italy, in the dominions of the Duke of Ferrara." [3] According to Mr. Nichols,[4] on New Year's Day 1534, among the royal rewards was one "to Nicolas Modena, that brought the King a story of Abraham," 6*s.* 8*d.* (*i.e.* to his servant). This is not given in the abstract in the State Papers, but, if correct, would seem to prove that Modena was in England some years before he was regularly employed in the royal service, and earlier than the letters with reference to his extradition suggest. The last year in which he is mentioned in the French accounts is 1533, which agrees with a possible arrival in England towards the end of that year, when he might seek to draw attention to his abilities by presenting a picture to the King. There appears, however, to be no further reference to him until 1538.

In the autumn of 1546 he was engaged upon work for some Revels at Hampton Court, arranged for the entertainment of the Admiral of France, for which he received £15. "Nich'as Modena, paynt', for garments of here (hair) upon lether, for wildme', to s've for torcheberers, wth thayr hed peces, staves, and clubbes, taken in great for all, 15*li.*" [5] These wildmen were satyrs or savage green-men, so much

[1] See Appendix (H).
[2] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 380 (f. 119b).
[3] *C.L.P.*, xvi. 1308 (5).
[4] *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 37.
[5] Loseley Manuscripts, "Revels at Hampton, 16 July to 6 Sep., 38 Hen. VIII."

in vogue in mimic entertainments of this period. Modena was also engaged in freshening up and altering a certain Mount, used in some Revels for the Coronation festivities of Edward VI, this mount being probably the same apparatus for a pageant which had been employed some forty years before, in the reign of Henry VIII, and had been laid up in the store of the Master of the Revels as a valuable piece of machinery. The entry runs : [1] " To Nych'as Modena, stranger, for as well his owne wages and 22 other carvers' wages, workeing upon the mouldyd w'ke appertayning to the mount, as also for clay, plaster parys, sewett, whyte paper, flower, glewe, syes, wax, here, colis (coals) for drying, with other necessaries." It will be noticed that he is still termed stranger, though possessed of a patent of denization.

In the following year, at Shrovetide 1548, he is termed " moulder " —" Nicholas Modena, moulder, for 6 heads of heres (hair) for masks a' 10*s*., 60*s*. ; trimming, color[s], and lyning 16 vysowres, at 12*d*., 16*s*." [2] In the roll of New Year's gifts 1552, received by the King, is an entry showing that he presented a picture. " By Modeno a feire picture paynted of the Frenche King his hoole personage, sett in a frame of wodde," and there was given in return " To Modeno, an Italian, oone guilte salte with a cover," weighing x oz. iij qrt' di." Another picture by him, the portrait of a boy, was in the Arundel Collection, and is entered in the 1655 inventory as " Ritratto d'un fanciullo," by " Nicolo da Modena."

At the funeral of King Edward VI, " Modena, maker of the King's picture," received four yards of black cloth, and he is mentioned again as " Nicholas Modena, kerver, four yards." The " King's picture " referred to in this extract was not a painting, but the coloured effigy carried and displayed on the King's coffin, as was the usual custom. Machyn, in his Diary, in his account of the same funeral, uses the term " picture " for the effigy—" then the chariot covered with cloth of gold, and on the chariot lay a picture, lying richly with a crown of gold, and a great collar, and a sceptre in his hand, lying in his robes, and the garter about his leg, and a coat in embroidery in gold." [3] Modena's share in this effigy would be the modelling of the head in the likeness of the King.

[1] Loseley Manuscripts, " Coronation of Ed. VI."
[2] Loseley Manuscripts, " Shrovetide Revels, 2 Ed. VI."
[3] Quoted by Nichols, *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 37.

Sir George Scharf [1] suggested that the very beautiful little whole-length figure of Henry VIII, carved in buff honestone, belonging to Mr. H. Dent-Brocklehurst, last exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1909 (Case A, No. 28), was the work of Nicolas Modena. It was apparently founded on Holbein's Whitehall painting of the King. "It has evidently been painted, as traces of blue and crimson on the dress still remain in some of the hollows." Sir George drew attention to the similarity of this exquisite piece of work, in its wooden frame, to Modena's gift to Edward VI of the fair painted picture of the French king, whole length, set in a frame of wood, mentioned above.

Another Italian painter of considerable distinction who was in England during the latter part of Henry's reign, was Girolamo Pennacchi da Treviso, son and pupil of Piermaria Pennacchi, born at Treviso in 1497, an imitator of Raphael, who worked chiefly at Bologna, Venice, and Genoa, and, so Vasari relates, came to England mainly on account of his unsuccessful rivalry with Perino del Vaga.[2] According to the same authority he was a good portrait painter, and in England received encouragement and patronage from the King. "In his service he exercised his talents as architect and engineer. He erected buildings in the Italian style which delighted and surprised the King beyond measure, who constantly loaded him with gifts, and assigned him a stipend of 400 scudi a year, giving him leave also to build himself a handsome house at the King's own expense. Girolamo lived most happily, and in the utmost content, thanking God and his good fortune for having placed him in a country where his merits were so well appreciated. But this unusual happiness did not last long; he went in his capacity of engineer to inspect the fortifications of Boulogne, during the siege, where a cannon-ball struck him lifeless off his horse. He thus died in 1544, at the early age of thirty-six." [3] He painted chiefly in fresco, so that little of his work remains. There is an important example of his art in the National Gallery, No. 623, an altar-piece painted for the Boccaferi Chapel in the Church of San Domenico at Bologna, representing the Virgin and Child enthroned, with SS. Joseph, James, and Paul, which was formerly in the Solly and Northwick collections. There is no other work in

[1] *Archæologia*, xxxix. p. 55.
[2] Cust, *Cat. Burl. F.A. Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 64; National Gallery Catalogue.
[3] Vasari, as quoted by Scharf, *Archæologia*, xxxix. pp. 53, 54.

this country which can be pointed out as being with any certainty from his brush, but Sir George Scharf was of opinion that the striking full-length portrait of Sir Thomas Gresham at the age of twenty-six, dated 1544, in Mercer's Hall, is, by its superior merit and its accordance in many respects with the style of Girolamo, in all probability by that painter, and also the portrait of the Earl of Surrey at Knole, attributed to Guillim or Gillam Stretes. The portrait of Sir Anthony Wingfield, lent by Mr. T. Humphry Ward to the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition in 1909 (No. 56, attributed to Holbein), is also suggested, by the compilers of the catalogue, as a possible work of the same artist. He is generally referred to in the royal accounts as "Hierome Trevix Bollonia" or "Jeronimo Italion," and received a salary of £25 a quarter. It may be inferred from Vasari's statement as to his erecting buildings in the Italian style, that he was employed at Nonsuch.

In addition to these more important artists and craftsmen, a number of minor painters, native and foreign, were at work in England during Henry's and the succeeding reigns, such as Nicholas Lyzarde, John Crust, John Simson, and the three members of the Bernardi family—Theodore, Lambert, and Anthony; but little or nothing is known about them beyond their names, and they need no comment here. With some of the more important men dealt with in this chapter Holbein must often have come in contact, and with certain of the Netherlanders, such as the Hornebolts, he seems to have been on terms of friendship.

NOTE.—Much of the information given in this chapter about the foreign artists who practised in England under Henry VIII is the result of a long and careful examination, on the part of the writer, of the *Calendars of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.* Since the final proofs of the chapter were passed for printing, his attention has been called to a very interesting paper on "The Italian Artists in England during the Sixteenth Century," read by Mr. R. W. Carden before the members of the Society of Antiquaries on 28th March 1912, and published in the Society's *Proceedings*, second series, vol. xxiv. (1911–12), pp. 171–204, issued early in 1913. In this paper, more particularly that part of it dealing with Bellin of Modena, Mr. Carden covers much the same ground as the present writer, and his information is based on a similar study of the *Letters*, &c. He gives, however, further new and valuable details of the work and lives of Torrigiano, Toto, Rovezzano, Maiano, and Bellin, and strives to prove that the latter and Niccolo dell' Abbate were one and the same man. He also shows that Bellin, in 1551, was engaged upon the completion of Henry VIII's tomb, and that he was then living within the precinct of Westminster Abbey, as Torrigiano did before him.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND: PORTRAITS OF THE MORE FAMILY

Holbein's arrival in England and his reception by Sir Thomas More—The More Family Group and the Basel study for it—The various copies of the picture at Nostell Priory, East Hendred, Burford Priory, and elsewhere—The Sotheby miniature—Studies for the heads in the Windsor Collection—The portrait of Sir Thomas More—Miniature of More in the late Mr. Pierpont Morgan's Collection—Portrait of Lady More—Margaret Roper—Drawing of unknown lady in the Salting Collection—Portrait at Shere said to represent Margaret Roper.



HE date of Holbein's arrival in England can be fixed with some certainty. The letter of introduction he carried from Erasmus to Peter Ægidius in Antwerp, as already pointed out, was dated 29th August 1526, and it must have been written on the eve of the painter's departure from Basel. Travelling was slow in those days, and Holbein would not be in a position to afford to make the whole journey on horseback. As he carried letters from Erasmus, the latter may have helped him with his travelling expenses, but no doubt the greater part of the journey would be made by boat down the Rhine, and for the rest he would trudge on foot, the materials of his craft on his back.

There is no evidence to show that he made a stay of any length in Antwerp; nor any record of a meeting with Ægidius or Metsys, though such meetings must almost certainly have taken place, for the former would be likely to do everything in his power to oblige Erasmus. Woltmann suggests that he stayed in Antwerp for at least some weeks, in order to earn some money, while Mr. Davies thinks that he made a somewhat lengthy sojourn in the Netherlands before coming to England.[1] "One may take it almost for granted," he says, "that a man of his sympathies, the fountain of whose art had already flowed down to him by Flemish channels, would not fail to use his opportunity for visiting the great Flemish primitives, the Van Eycks, Mem-

[1] See above, p. 245.

linc, Van der Weyden, Gerard David in their own homes. Ghent and Bruges lay at no great distance seaward, and whether he took ship at Flushing, or chose the longer land route and the shorter sea passage by Calais—an expensive method for one whose pockets were as empty as Holbein's—he would, one feels sure, have made the pilgrimage to those two cities." [1]

Dr. Waagen also believed that Holbein made a considerable delay in Antwerp, for the purpose of painting the portrait of Ægidius, now in Longford Castle, at that time considered to be from his hand; and he also held the theory that the "Laïs Corinthiaca" and the "Venus" were painted on the same occasion, seeing in them a Netherlandish influence. Mr. Davies, in a second passage, to which reference has been made,[2] asserts that Holbein "spent several months in or about Antwerp on his way to England in 1526." He admits, however, that he is dealing with mere probabilities, and it is much more likely that Holbein would waste as little time as possible in reaching the country in which he hoped to improve his fortunes, and would tarry only a day or two in Antwerp, in order to make the acquaintance of Metsys; and that he then either took ship at that port, or, which is less probable, tramped on to Calais, the customary point of embarkation for England. He may thus have reached London easily by the beginning or middle of October 1526. It is, in any case, quite certain that he did not spend "several months in or about Antwerp." This is proved both by a letter from Sir Thomas More to Erasmus, dated 18th December, and by the fact that the preliminary studies, or, at least, the general study for the grouping in the More family portrait, now in the Basel Gallery, must have been finished before the 7th February 1527.

Holbein, of course, would carry with him a letter of introduction from Erasmus to More, and very possibly to Warham, Fisher, and other correspondents of the philosopher then in England. There is no reason to throw doubt on Carel van Mander's statement that he was received as a guest in Sir Thomas More's hospitable house in Chelsea. Van Mander's biography contains numerous inaccuracies, although he wrote only some sixty years after Holbein's death; but in this instance he is probably correct. More, who was noted for his hospitality, would welcome to his home any friend sent

[1] Davies, p. 115.

[2] See page 245. Davies, p. 94.

to him by Erasmus, and would do all that he could to help a foreigner, who can have had little or no knowledge of the English language. Van Mander's statement has been copied and amplified by later writers until the legend runs that Holbein spent the greater part of three years under More's roof; but this is not at all likely to have happened. During the painting of the great family picture, or, in any case, while the preliminary studies were being made, and other single portraits of members of More's household taken, Holbein, no doubt, remained as a guest at Chelsea, if only for the convenience of the several sitters, but that he stayed throughout the whole of his first English visit as More's guest is doubtful. He would, naturally, wish for a studio and lodging of his own, however humble, where he would be free to do just as he liked. Whether he set up his easel in the village hard by his patron's house, or in London itself, where he would find a number of compatriots, it is not now possible to say, though an item in the royal accounts in connection with the festivities at Greenwich in 1527[1] seems to indicate that he had settled in the city; while, on the other hand, nearly all the portraits painted by him at this time were of men who were among More's most intimate personal friends, whom Holbein would be more likely to meet in Chelsea than in London.

More certainly did everything in his power to help the painter. He not only gave him commissions for single portraits of himself and his wife, and, possibly, of his favourite daughter, Margaret Roper, but also for the large family group already mentioned. It is to be supposed that Holbein had carried with him some specimens of his handiwork by which Sir Thomas could judge of his ability, and he would almost certainly have with him proofs of the "Dance of Death" woodcuts, in themselves more than sufficient testimony to the brilliance of his artistic powers. Sir Thomas must also have had earlier knowledge of his skill both as a portrait painter and a book illustrator, in the likenesses of Erasmus already sent to this country, and in the various books by Erasmus and others, including his own *Utopia*, issued by Froben and other printers of Basel, which Holbein had helped to decorate.

In a long letter to Erasmus, mentioned above,[2] dated 18th December, More gives a few words of praise and a promise of help to their common friend and protegé: "Your painter, dearest Erasmus,

[1] See below, p. 315.

[2] See p. 169.

is a wonderful artist, but I fear he is not likely to find England so abundantly fertile as he had hoped; although I will do what I can to prevent his finding it quite barren."[1] This letter, as already stated, is dated 1525 in the published letters of Erasmus, but the correct date is 1526, as first pointed out by Mr. F. M. Nichols, F.S.A.[2] It has been generally supposed that it was written after More had seen certain portraits of Erasmus sent over from Basel about 1524, and that his promise of help to the painter had reference to a projected visit to England on the part of Holbein. Mr. Nichols, however, proves conclusively that it was written after More had made his personal acquaintance. "The true date," he says, "is shown not only by the allusion to Holbein, who was evidently in England at the time, but still more certainly by the literary work of Erasmus mentioned in it. The first part of the *Hyperaspistes* (the answer of Erasmus to the *Servum Arbitrium* of Luther), printed in the spring of 1526, and the *Institution of Christian Marriage*, printed in August of the same year, are both mentioned as already published, and the second part of *Hyperaspistes* as expected. This last book was published at the close of the same year, 1526, not much after the date of the letter as here corrected." More, therefore, wrote to Erasmus in praise of Holbein after he had received practical proof, in the shape of his studies for the Family Group, of what the latter was capable in the way of portraiture.

The earliest work undertaken by the artist was the painting of this group of his host's family, and the several individual portraits of certain members of the Chelsea household, of which the first would be undoubtedly that of his new patron.

The inscriptions on the study for the Family Group, now in the Basel Gallery, prove conclusively that the beautiful sketch of the general arrangement of the picture was finished, and possibly the picture itself begun, before 7th February 1527, thus indicating that Holbein must have started upon it with little delay. This fact is made clear through the researches of Mr. Nichols, included in a second and earlier paper read before the Society of Antiquaries in 1897,[3] dealing with the correct birth-year of Sir Thomas More. It is im-

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. i. 1826; *Erasmi Opera*, iii. 951.
[2] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, Second Series, xvii. No. i. pp. 132–145.
[3] *Proceedings*, Second Series, xvi. No. iii. pp. 321–327.

possible to give here even a short summary of the evidence which he brings forward, evidence which proves that More was born on 7th February 1477, a year earlier than the date until then supposed to be the correct one. He then proceeds to show the bearing of this new year-date upon the Basel sketch. The sketch has the name and age of the persons represented in it written against each figure, and it is important to observe that there is a strong probability that these inscriptions were written or dictated by More himself. They are correctly written in Latin, while the painter's notes on the same drawing are in German; and, as Mr. Nichols says, the information, including on the one hand the age of More's venerable father, and on the other that of his domestic fool, could scarcely have been furnished by any one but More himself. Woltmann recognises the handwriting as undoubtedly that of More from its remarkable resemblance to the address on the letter held in the hand of Peter Ægidius in the Longford Castle portrait, which More declared was copied quite as closely as he could have copied it himself.

In the Basel sketch he has written above his own portrait, *Thomas Morus anno* 50—that is, *anno quinquagesimo*, " in his fiftieth year " —and, according to the corrected birth-date, Sir Thomas was in his fiftieth year from 7th February 1526 to 7th February 1527, which proves that the big picture had been completely planned out, and probably well advanced, before the latter date. In support of this contention, it will be found that not only the age of More himself, but that of other members of his family where they can be verified, point to the same date. Thus, Erasmus, who prided himself on his remarkable memory for the ages of his friends, says that John More, Sir Thomas's only son, was just about thirteen in the summer of 1521, so that he would be in his nineteenth year in the autumn and winter of 1526, which is the age attributed to him on the sketch; while the dates of the birth and death of John More's wife, Anne Cresacre, are known, and tally with the " anno 15 " on the same drawing. More's eldest child, Margaret Roper, is described as in her twenty-second year, and though the precise date of her birth is not known, the marriage of her parents took place in the twentieth year of Henry VII (21st August 1504–21st August 1505), which is consistent with her birth at any time between the summer of 1505 and the 7th February 1506, and therefore with her being in her twenty-second year at the date

attributed to the sketch. It appears, therefore, that the evidence of all these inscriptions either confirms that date or is not inconsistent with it.

This proves that the Family Group was the first work undertaken by Holbein in England, and that in the intervals of painting the larger picture he was engaged upon a single portrait of Sir Thomas More and upon others of certain of the latter's friends.

Unfortunately, the picture itself, if ever completed by Holbein, has disappeared. "For nothing," says Walpole, "has Holbein's name been oftener mentioned than for the picture of Sir Thomas More's family. Yet of six pieces extant on this subject, the two smaller are certainly copies, the three larger probably not painted by Holbein, and the sixth, though an original picture, most likely not of Sir Thomas and his family." [1]

The Basel sketch (No. 345) [2] (Pl. 74), upon which the various pictures still in existence are based, affords the most faithful record we possess of the great work itself, now lost, or buried under the handiwork of some inferior painter. It represents a large apartment with a group of ten persons, with two smaller figures seen through an open door in a room at the back. Sir Thomas More is seated in the centre of the group, dressed in long robes, his hands concealed in a muff. In attire, attitude, and expression the sketch agrees very closely with the portrait of More in the possession of Mr. Edward Huth. On his right hand, to the spectator's left, is seated his old father, Sir John More, a judge of the King's Bench (anno 76), looking straight out of the picture. By Sir John's right side stands Margaret Gigs (anno 22), a relative of the family, afterwards married to Dr. John Clement. She has a book in her left hand, to which she points with her right, as though emphasizing a passage she is reading to the old man, towards whom she stoops. In front of her, and still further to the spectator's left, the outside member of the group, stands Elizabeth Dancey (anno 21), More's second daughter, with a book under her arm, drawing on her glove.

On the opposite side, on the spectator's right, in the foreground, is a group of three, which includes More's second wife, Alice Middleton

[1] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, 1888, i. 90. The sixth picture to which he refers is the Meyer Madonna.

[2] Woltmann, 35. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 192, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 55, and *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 23 ; Davies, p. 116 ; Knackfuss, fig. 93.

(anno 54), on the extreme right, kneeling on a prie-dieu, with a chained monkey by her side jumping up against her dress; Margaret Roper (anno 22), More's eldest and favourite daughter, seated on the ground on a low stool in front of her stepmother, an open book held in her lap, gazing in front of her, as though lost in thought over the volume she has been reading; and Cecilia Heron (anno 20), the youngest girl, seated behind, and partly concealed by her sister, with a book and rosary in her hand, and her head turned as though speaking to Lady More. In the centre, behind Sir Thomas, stand, on the right, his only son, John More (anno 19), looking down, absorbed in a book, and on the left, Anne Cresacre, his betrothed, a girl in her fifteenth year. The group is completed by the bluff figure of Henry Patenson, More's jester, who stands to the right of More's son, with arms akimbo in the favourite fashion of Henry VIII. Over his shoulder, through a doorway, with a kind of porch of open woodwork which projects into the apartment, are seen the heads of the two small figures mentioned above. The room in which the group is placed is probably the dining-hall. On the left there is a sideboard reaching to the ceiling, with a flower-vase, tankards, and silver plate. On the sill of a window on the opposite side of the room there are a jug, a candlestick, and some books. The wall at the back in the centre is covered with a curtain, in front of which a clock with weights is hanging, and a violin near it.

The whole arrangement is of a somewhat formal and stately character, and both in the attitudes and occupations of the figures indicates a house of learning; even in the foreground books are scattered all over the floor. This masterly sketch, small as it is, is full of character. Each figure has marked individuality, and Holbein, with a few slight touches of his pencil, has in every case given a most truthful likeness, as may be proved by comparison with the larger studies of seven of the heads now in the Windsor Collection. From this brilliant study it is quite possible to gain a very adequate idea of how splendid the finished picture must have been, if, indeed, Holbein ever completed it. Whether the Basel drawing was merely Holbein's first arrangement of the grouping, hastily done, or a drawing made at More's request from the outlined design on the canvas for the purpose of sending it to Erasmus, is uncertain; but, in any case, the portraiture of all the heads, which are only sketched in a few lines,

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STUDY FOR THE MORE FAMILY GROUP

Drawing in Indian ink, with corrections and inscriptions in brown

BASEL GALLERY


Elizabeth Dauncy
thome mori filia
anno 21
Johannes
mori pueri
anno 16
Thomas mori
anno 50
margareta
thome mori filia
anno 22
cecilia gerona thome mori filia anno 20

is complete and striking, and every touch stamps it as the work of one who was a master before he had reached his thirtieth year.

There are various copies of this great family picture in England, mostly of late origin and showing numerous differences. The only one which has any real claim to be considered the original work is the large canvas belonging to Lord St. Oswald at Nostell Priory, near Wakefield, which has been for many years in the possession of the Winn family (Pl. 75).[1] Most writers have identified it with the picture mentioned by Carel van Mander, whose book was first published in 1604, as seen by him in London in the possession of Andries de Loo, who had collected a number of Holbein's works. "This lover of art," he says, "had a large canvas, painted in water-colours, on which was depicted, as large as life, from head to foot, the learned and famous Thomas Morus, with his wife, sons, and daughters, all magnificently arrayed, a piece worthy to be seen and highly extolled." On De Loo's death, he continues, it was purchased by one of More's grandsons, who was also named More. According to the family history, however, the buyer was the son of Margaret Roper, of Well Hall, Eltham, near Blackheath, where it still remained in 1731, when it was carefully described by the Rev. J. Lewis. It eventually passed by marriage to Sir Rowland Winn, of Nostell Priory, the ancestor of the present owner. Van Mander, it will be noted, says that this picture was in water-colours, or tempera, on canvas, which, if true, seems to indicate that it was not the work now at Nostell Priory, though repeated repairing and varnishing may have rendered the method of its painting uncertain to decide. Van Mander's account of Holbein's career is by no means free from inaccuracies, but the evidence seems to point to the fact that his history of the picture is substantially correct.[2]

There are considerable but, with two exceptions, not very important differences between the Nostell Priory picture and the Basel sketch. The latter is seen at once to be a first study for the grouping of the former, to which the artist adhered closely in almost all points. In the first place, it is interesting to note that the only two alterations suggested on the sketch itself, in Holbein's own handwriting—"Dise

[1] Engraved by Dean for *The Bijou*, 1829.

[2] One of the versions of the picture was in the Earl of Arundel's collection, and is entered in the 1655 inventory as "Tomaso Moro con la sua famiglia." In the same collection there was a portrait of More's son, entered as "Il figliolo de Tomaso Moro," but without the name of the artist. See Appendix (I) for the history of the Nostell picture.

soll sitzen" (she is to be sitting), placed against Lady More, and "Klafikordi vnd ander Sithespill vf dem bank" (harpsichords and other instruments on a shelf), to the left on the wall at the back, close by the cupboard or sideboard, where only a violin is hanging in the sketch—have both been carried out in the completed picture, though in the end the painter put the instruments on the sideboard in place of the silver plate, instead of on a shelf.

The two chief points in which the finished picture deviates from the sketch are the change in the positions of Elizabeth Dancey and Margaret Gigs, and the introduction of More's "famulus," John Heresius or Harris, who stands in the doorway at the back, with a roll of parchment in his hands, while beyond him, in the farther room, is a man standing at a large bay-window, holding a book which he is reading. The positions of Elizabeth Dancey and Margaret Gigs have been reversed. The former now stands next to Sir John, while the latter has taken her place on the extreme left, and, instead of stooping, stands upright, looking in front of her, but with her right hand still pointing to the open book in her left. Her head-dress is less elaborate than in the Basel sketch, and follows closely the plain white hood she is shown as wearing in the beautiful study at Windsor, erroneously inscribed "Mother Jak." Two dogs are also introduced—a "cur-dog" at the feet of Sir John, and a "Bologna shock" at the feet of Sir Thomas, to quote from Mr. Lewis.[1] The various accessories in the room have also been to some extent changed, both on the sideboard and on the window-sill on the right. The titles of the books are given in most cases. Thus Margaret Roper holds open Seneca's *Œdipus* at the chorus in Act iv., Elizabeth Dancey has Seneca's *Epistles* under her arm, while *Boetius de Consolatione Philosophiæ* is on the sideboard.

The critics are by no means agreed as to the merits of this picture. Dr. Waagen came to the conclusion that it was nothing more than an old copy, yet he dated it as about 1530 on technical grounds, due to the redness of the flesh tints, which he regarded as a characteristic of Holbein's painting at that period—a strange conclusion to reach after giving it as his opinion that it was only a copy. Passavant, Vertue, and Walpole considered that it was made up by some inferior painter from Holbein's separate studies of the heads. "As the portraits of

[1] Roper's *Life and Death of Sir Thomas More*, &c., ed. Rev. J. Lewis, 1731, p. 169.

THE MORE FAMILY GROUP

Lord St. Oswald's collection

NOSTELL PRIORY



the family," says Walpole, " in separate pieces,[1] were already drawn by Holbein, the injudicious journeyman stuck them in as he found them, and never varied the lights, which were disposed, as it was indifferent in single heads, some from the right, some from the left, but which make a ridiculous contradiction when transported into one piece." [2] Wornum's opinion was that " the picture is without question unequal in its parts, some portions certainly being unworthy of Holbein; others, though much better, still bear no trace of the great master's hand; the want of finish, too, is in parts apparent. The dogs are very bad, especially the foremost one; notwithstanding all this, however, there may be a genuine Holbein groundwork beneath." [3] Woltmann, who saw it when it was in the National Portrait Exhibition of 1866, agreed with Waagen that it was only a good old copy. " Still this large picture is in a high degree interesting. Though the hand that copied it betrays, indeed, an able but in nowise clever painter, though the coldness of the execution is apparent in the unattractive accessories, still it shows us, to a certain extent, with what careful and delicate study the original picture had been executed." [4]

The late Mr. F. G. Stephens examined the picture very carefully in 1880, and embodied the result of his study in one of his series of articles on " The Private Collections of England," published in the *Athenæum*.[5] He came to the conclusion that certain portions were undoubtedly from the brush of Holbein, but that upon the greater part of the canvas he had merely sketched or pounced in the design, which had then been finished by some other painter not skilled enough to follow up with any success the lines laid down by the greater master, who for some unknown reason had abandoned the completion of the work. At the same time he was of opinion that even the parts which he attributed to Holbein by no means remained in the state in which he left them. His final conclusion was that Holbein left the canvas with only one head, that of Sir Thomas More, nearly finished; certain other heads—of Judge More, and the group of three on the right, Margaret Roper, Cecilia Heron, and Lady More—far advanced in execution, and one or two others in the background carried only a little further than the designing stage. Beyond this Holbein did not go; the

[1] The heads in the Windsor Collection.

[2] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, 1888, p. 92. [3] Wornum, p. 244.

[4] Woltmann, 1st ed., Eng. trans. p. 322. For Vertue's account, see Appendix (I).

[5] Nos. lviii. and lix., " Nostell Priory, Wakefield," *Athenæum*, Sept. 18, 25, 1880.

remainder was left in outline, subject to correction to be made as the work proceeded. The man engaged to complete the picture covered the canvas as well as he could, but failed to retain any of the beauty of Holbein's original design, or to introduce the generalising and systematic light and shade with which Holbein would have brought each part into harmony, or even to transfer to the canvas the animated portraiture and other high qualities of the cartoons which were available for that purpose. Most of the figures are of extreme disproportion, heads being too large for the bodies, and bodies too large for the legs, while the actions are awkward, and many of the faces lack animation and intelligence. The dogs are so bad that Mr. Stephens was of opinion that they were added even later by a third and still less skilful painter. On the other hand, he regarded the head of More as "a marvellous rendering of insight into human character, reproducing with extreme subtlety the utmost energy of thoughtfulness as marked on a visage where a far-seeing, vigorous soul has, so to say, written itself in every line and feature, and manifested itself in those penetrative yet meditating eyes, those fine thin lips, and affected the fine reserve of every lineament."

This solution is possibly the correct one. All the other versions of the picture in existence are based on the Nostell Priory example. The Basel sketch was not available for the purpose, having been sent to Erasmus, and it is far from likely that all these works were copied or adapted from some original painting by Holbein now lost. At the death of Sir Thomas More much of his property was seized by the Crown, but even if such a picture were taken from the family, it does not follow that it would be destroyed. Thus there is every probability that the version seen by Van Mander in the collection of De Loo was the original picture, and that it was the one now in Nostell Priory. The most natural supposition is that Holbein was unable to finish it through want of time. He was back in Basel not later than the summer of 1528, as on the 29th August of that year, exactly two years from the date of Erasmus' letter to Ægidius, he purchased a house in that city. As a citizen of Basel he must have obtained leave of absence before starting for England, and such leave would probably be for two years only, with penalties attached to it if he failed to return in time. His stay in England cannot have lasted much more than eighteen months, and during that period he was very

busily occupied. As already shown, the Basel sketch for the big picture must have been made before 7th February 1527, on which day More was fifty years old. Curiously enough, on the day following, 8th February, Holbein started upon an important work of decoration, described below,[1] which occupied his entire time from that date until early in April, and for which he received payment from the royal purse. During the remainder of his first English visit he was engaged upon a number of portraits, including those of Sir Thomas More, Lady More, Archbishop Warham, Sir Henry Guldeford and his wife, the Godsalves, Kratzer, and possibly one or two others, such as Fisher, Reskimer, and Bryan Tuke, while in the intervals between these commissions he was, no doubt, busily at work upon the heads of the Family Group. His recall to Basel may have been peremptory, and so have forced him to leave in a hurry. In any case, he must have parted on good terms with More, for he was entrusted with the Basel sketch for delivery to Erasmus as a present from the author of the *Utopia*. Very possibly he promised to come back in order to finish the picture, but when a year or two had passed by without sign of his return, Sir Thomas, having given up all hope of seeing him again, may have decided to get it finished by some other painter. When the Nostell Priory picture was carefully cleaned some thirty-five years ago, it was found to be dated 1530, a date which well agrees with this theory. The same date, 1530, is on the Basel sketch, but it is below the drawing and by a later hand, and may have been added by some one who had knowledge of the date on one or other of the versions of the picture in England, or from the supposition that More was fifty in that year. The sketch was badly engraved by Nicolas Cochin in the *Tabellæ Selectæ* of Caroline Patin, published in 1691, and on this engraving no date is given. Von Mechel engraved it in 1794 in his *Œuvres de Jean Holbein*, with the date 1530, so that it was added to the drawing between these two dates. Von Mechel gives both a facsimile of the original sketch and an engraving which he inscribes " Ex tabula Joh. Holbenii in Anglia adservata " ; but none of the alterations which Holbein, according to his written notes on the sketch, proposed to carry out in the finished picture, are shown in this engraving, which proves that it was not copied from any original painting. Dr. Woltmann discovered Mechel's model in a sepia drawing in the Gothic

[1] See pp. 311–16.

House at Wörlitz, which is evidently a copy of the original Basel design, executed long after Holbein's time, and bearing some written notices in Lavater's hand.[1]

A careful description is given by Mr. Wornum[2] of the various versions of the picture still in existence, all of which are based on the Nostell Priory example. Two of them were originally of the same size as the latter, which is 8 ft. 4 in. high by 11 ft. 8 in. wide. One of these in Walpole's time was at Barnborough in Yorkshire, the seat of the Cresacres, and in 1867 in the possession of Mr. Charles John Eyston of East Hendred, Berkshire; and the other, a similar work, was formerly at Heron in Essex, the seat of Sir John Tyrrell, and afterwards in the collection of Lord Petre at Thorndon, near Brentford.

The East Hendred version measures 7 ft. 8 in. high by 9 ft. 9½ in. wide. At some time or other it had suffered from damage or decay on the right-hand side, and has been cut down to fit a panel, so that the figure of Lady More and her monkey and the more advanced of the two dogs, together with the window and the vase of flowers, have disappeared. With the exception of these changes and a few other unskilful repairs, this picture is in the main identical with the one at Nostell Priory, though very inferior to it. The Thorndon picture is also on canvas, and is 8 ft. 3 in. high by 11 ft. 2 in. wide. It is in a better state than the East Hendred example, and is copied from the same source, with slight changes. There is only one dog, Lady More is seated in a large scarlet arm-chair, and there are slight differences in the minor details, while Sir Thomas is shown with a moustache. Both these pictures are coarsely painted, and have little but an historical interest.[3] Wornum also describes a picture on canvas, 4 ft. 7 in. by 3 ft. 9 in., of Sir Thomas and his father, the latter in his scarlet robes, at Hutton Hall,[4] which was lent to the Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (No. 150), by Sir Henry Vane, Bt., and is apparently copied from the central portion of the Nostell Priory canvas, with the addition of a coat of arms, and two original inscriptions over the heads, and the date 1530. Sir Thomas's age is given as 50 (Ætatis 50), but Sir John's as 77, instead of "Anno 76" as in the sketch. Otherwise, in all these pictures, the ages of the sitters agree with the sketch, though the latter

[1] Woltmann, i. 350, note.
[2] Wornum, pp. 231–246.
[3] See Appendix (I).
[4] Wornum, pp. 245–6.

was done in 1527 and the former in 1530. This may be perhaps explained by the fact that Sir Thomas wished the ages to be kept as they were at the time when the studies were made, rather than when the picture was completed by another hand.

One other version of importance was in Walpole's day at Burford Priory, Oxfordshire, the seat of William Lenthall, the Speaker (Pl. 76),[1] who purchased the estate from Viscount Falkland, together with the pictures in the house. This version of the Group, before the Speaker owned it, had been in the possession of the Mores, at Gubbins, in Hertfordshire. By what means it passed into the hands of Lenthall, says Walpole, is uncertain. He is said to have purchased a number of pictures from the royal collections at Whitehall and Hampton Court, but the More Family Group did not come from that source, nor was it acquired from Viscount Falkland, for, according to Dallaway (note to Walpole, vol. i. p. 91), it was described by Aubrey in 1670 when in Lenthall's earlier home at Besselsleigh, Berks, who says that it had an inscription in golden letters of about sixty lines. It was bought in at the Lenthall sale at Christie's in 1808 for one thousand guineas. It reappeared in the saleroom in 1833, when it fetched only one hundred guineas, and came into the possession of the Strickland family of Cokethorpe Park, Ducklington, Oxfordshire, and, later on, passed from them by marriage to the Cottrell-Dormer family. A few years ago it was under consideration by the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, but was not purchased, and, finally, it made a third appearance at Christie's on 26th February 1910, when it was acquired by Sir Hugh P. Lane for nine hundred and fifty guineas. It measures 7 ft. 6 in. high by 11 ft. wide, and is dated 1593.[2] It contains eleven figures, and is made up from the original composition and portraits of later members of the family. Seven of the figures of Holbein's group have been pushed to the spectator's left, the ones omitted being Lady More, Margaret Gigs, Patenson, and the secretary, Harris. Elizabeth Dancey has been moved to the centre, behind and between her two seated sisters. The right side of the picture contains a group of four people of a later generation, the Chancellor's grandson, Thomas More, and his wife, Maria Scrope, and their two sons, the elder of whom was the Thomas

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 193.

[2] According to Mr. W. Roberts, *Memorials of Christie's*, 1897, vol. i. p. 81, the measurements of the picture, as given in the sale catalogue of 1808, are 10 ft. by 15 ft.

More who wrote the life of his great-grandfather. In the background there is a sideboard on the left, as in the Basel sketch, with two vases of flowers, and musical instruments, and the hanging clock is shown in its original position in the centre; but on the left the framed portrait of a lady has been introduced. In addition, coats of arms have been painted above seven of the heads without regard to the background itself. In an account of the Priory and its contents, communicated to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1799 (vol. lxix. pt. 2, p. 644), by an anonymous correspondent, who describes the big picture in some detail, the portrait hanging on the wall is said to represent the wife of Sir John More. There is a large miniature painting of the picture, which was in the Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (No. 1087),[1] lent by Major-General F. E. Sotheby, and attributed to Peter Oliver, as it was by Walpole, who says: "The painter of this exquisite little piece is unknown, but probably was Peter Oliver."[2] The picture and the miniature do not agree, however, in all the details. The latter includes twelve figures, for Patenson is introduced in the background peeping through a curtain in the centre. Only two coats of arms are shown, over the heads of Sir Thomas More and his father, and on the right-hand side, behind the later group of portraits, in place of the wall with the lady's portrait there is an open archway through which is seen the Mores' walled garden at Chelsea and a distant view of London. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the large picture was the work of Rowland Lockey, who was working about 1590–1610. He was a pupil of Nicholas Hilliard, and was extolled by Richard Haydock (1598) and Francis Meres (1598) as among the eminent artists then living in England. It is stated in Nichol's *History of Leicestershire*[3] that he painted "a neat piece in oil, containing in one table the picture of Sir John More, a judge of the King's Bench, *temp.* Henry VIII, and of his wife, and of Sir Thomas More, lord chancellor, his son and his wife, and of all the lineal heirs male descended from them, together with each man's wife unto that present year." The expression "neat," however, would apply more aptly to the large miniature group, and it is very possible that he was the author of it.

There are separate studies for the heads of seven of the sitters in

[1] Reproduced in the catalogue, p. 214.

[2] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, 1888, p. 92.

[3] Vol. iii. pt. i. p. 490.

THE MORE FAMILY GROUP

The Version formerly at Burford Priory. Now in the possession of Messrs. Parkenthorpe



the family picture among the Holbein drawings in Windsor Castle. Sir John More,[1] Sir Thomas, his son John,[2] his daughters Elizabeth[3] and Cecilia (Pl. 77),[4] Anne Cresacre,[5] and Margaret Clement.[6] These are all larger than the majority of the sketches in the collection, and on white unprimed paper. There are two drawings of Sir Thomas (Pl. 78),[7] which, although the face is taken from the same point of view, are not replicas, but distinctly separate studies; the pose is slightly different, and the hair quite unlike, and it may perhaps be conjectured that one of them is the study made for the Group, and the other a later study made shortly before the artist left England.

In addition to the family picture, Holbein painted separate portraits of Sir Thomas, Lady More, and, possibly, Margaret Roper. The portrait of More is the well-known one belonging to Mr. Edward Huth,[8] which has been frequently exhibited, most recently at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1909 (No. 53). Before it came into the possession of the Huth family it was in the collection of an Irish nobleman, from whom it was acquired—in payment for a picture-cleaning bill, so it is said—by Farrer, the picture-dealer, who sold it to Mr. Henry Huth for £1200. It was probably the first work painted by Holbein after his arrival in England, and finished early in 1527. It is based on the head in the Windsor Collection, and the position corresponds with the figure in the Basel sketch. It is a half-length, seated, three-quarters to the spectator's right, with dark hair, and clean-shaven, but the grey of the moustache and beard indicated. He is dressed in black cap, black gown lined with brown fur, with deep fur collar, and a golden collar of SS. with portcullis clasps and Tudor rose pendant. His right elbow rests on a table to the left, and he holds a folded paper in both hands. The background consists of a green curtain with a gold fringe, looped back by a gold cord. The date "MDXXVII" is inscribed on the edge of the table.

[1] Woltmann, 275; Wornum, i. 6; Sir R. Holmes, i. 4.

[2] Woltmann, 276; Wornum, i. 42; Sir R. Holmes, i. 7.

[3] Wrongly inscribed "The Lady Barkley." Woltmann, 278; Wornum, ii. 34; Sir R. Holmes, i. 5.

[4] Woltmann, 279; Wornum, ii. 12; Sir R. Holmes, i. 6.

[5] Woltmann, 277; Wornum, ii. 35; Sir R. Holmes, i. 8.

[6] Wrongly inscribed "Mother Jak." Woltmann, 280; Wornum, ii. 40; Sir R. Holmes, i. 9.

[7] Woltmann, 273, 274; Wornum, i. 3, 4; Sir R. Holmes, i. 3 and ii. 18.

[8] Woltmann, 207. Reproduced by Davies, p. 118; *Catalogue of the Tudor Exhibition*, 1890, p. 44; A. F. Pollard, *Henry VIII*, p. 114; *Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhib. Catg.*, Pl. xviii.; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 69. The portrait is now in America. See Appendix (I).

This noble representation of a noble man is one of the finest portraits painted by Holbein in this country. It has suffered somewhat in the course of time, but still remains a wonderful study of character, penetrating in its insight. The nobility of More's nature, the strength of his will, the gentleness of his disposition when not roused to just anger, the firmness of the finely-cut lips, and the penetrating glance of his bright eyes, have been mirrored by Holbein as though in a glass. Both the statesman and the scholar stand revealed with that searching power of seizing the essentials of a man's nature which is one of the greatest qualities of Holbein's art.

A portrait of Sir Thomas was in the Orleans Gallery in 1727, and a second was in the possession of Lord Lumley in 1590, and was sold from Lumley Castle in 1785, to Mr. Hay, of Savile Row.[1] The latter was probably the one now belonging to Mr. Huth, and is the original from which so many copies have been made.[2] The panel on which it is painted measures 29 in. by 23½ in. There are also a variety of portraits scattered about the European museums to which the name of Sir Thomas More has been attached erroneously. The small portrait by Holbein of Sir Henry Wyat, father of Sir Thomas Wyat, in the Louvre, was long regarded as a likeness of More, and is still so described in the official catalogue.[3] There is another small panel, in the Brussels Museum (No. 641), to which the names of Holbein and More were attached on the frame-label until quite recently, although both ascriptions are absurd. It represents a bearded man with one hand thrust within the folds of his cloak, and a small book held open with the fingers of the other, and a small dog on the table in front of him. It was recognised as the work of some second-rate French artist more than fifty years ago, and bears not the slightest resemblance to

[1] *Catg. Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib.*, 1909, p. 95. The entry in the Lumley inventory is—"Of Sir Thomas Moore, Lo. Chancellor, drawne by Haunce Holbyn."

[2] One of these copies was in 1867 in the possession of Mr. Charles J. Eyston, of East Hendred (Wornum, p. 246), and a second in the collection of the Marquis of Lothian. There was a small circular portrait of More, on wood, 4 in. in diameter, in Charles I's collection (No. 48), in a black cap, furred gown, and red sleeves. Evelyn notes in his Diary, under the date Feb. 15th, 1649:—"Sir William Ducy shew'd me some excellent things in miniature, and in oyle of Holbein's *Sir Tho. More's* head." Among the numerous copies in existence is one by Rubens in the Prado, Madrid. A portrait of More, "invested with the collar of the Garter, by Holbein; upon a pedestal is inscribed the date, MDXXVII," was included in the sale of the Duke of Bedford's pictures from Woburn Abbey, on 30th June 1827, and fetched 70 guineas.

[3] See p. 335.

CECILIA HERON

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

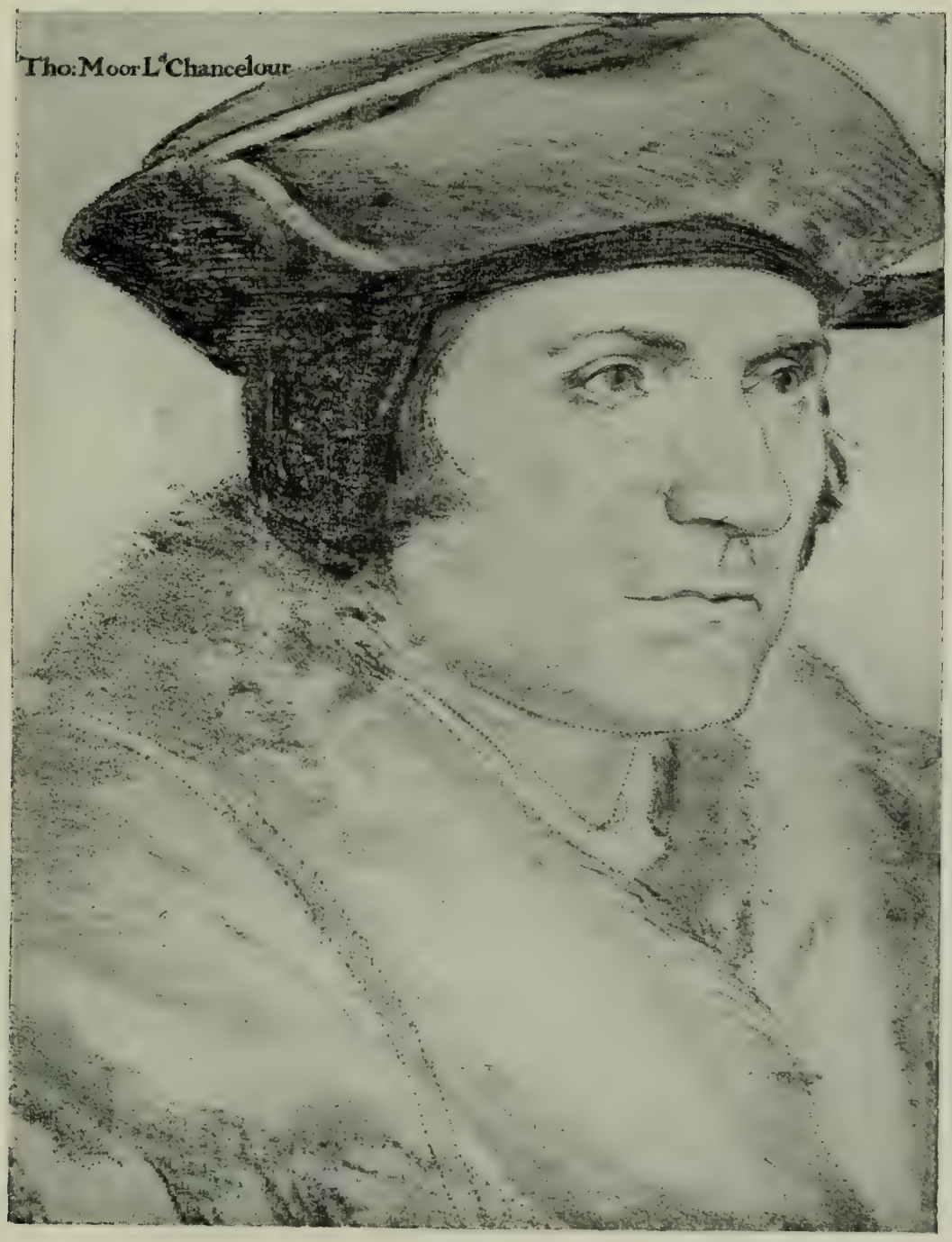
WINDSOR CASTLE



SIR THOMAS MORE

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

WINDSOR CASTLE


Tho: Moor L^d Chancelour

Holbein's style.[1] M. A. J. Wauters suggests that it is the work of Nicolas Denisot (1515–1559), a French poet and painter of modest capacities, who was in England for three years as French tutor to the three daughters of the Protector Somerset. Under his guidance these young ladies wrote Latin elegies to Margaret of Navarre, which were published under his editorship. A portrait of Margaret, dated 1544, is attributed by M. Bouchot to Denisot. More recently this work has been attributed to Corneille de Lyon, and is said to be a portrait of Henry Patenson. There is certainly a slight likeness between it and the head of Patenson in the Basel study for the More Family Group.

A curious legend with regard to a portrait of More which Henry VIII is said to have possessed, was contributed to the *Athenæum* by Dr. Augustus Jessop.[2] He found it among the papers of the Hon. Roger North, in a somewhat elaborate "Register of Pictures" at one time in North's custody. In giving an account of a portrait of Pope Gregory XIV, which his brother Montague had bought at Marseilles in 1693, he adds: "This picture is judged to be by Pomerantius, painter to Gregory XIV, who was in England *tempore* Henry VIII, concerning whom the following story is told. *The picture of Sir T. More done by Holbein* was in Whitehall when the news was brought to Henry VIII that Sir Thomas More was beheaded. And the King fell into a passion upon the news, and running to the picture, *tore it down and threw it out of the window. And the picture in the fall broke in three pieces;* but Pomerantius, then coming by, took it up, carried it home, and so put it together and mended the colours that it is not to be discovered that it was ever broke."

However much or however little truth there may be in this story, which was apparently current in the seventeenth century, it is certain, in any case, that "Pomerantius" can have had nothing to do with its rescue. Niccolo Circignano (Il Pomarancio) was born in 1519, and would be a lad of sixteen at the time when More was executed; nor is there any evidence to show that he was ever in England. He appears to have spent the greater part of his life in Rome. The account errs, also, in saying that he was painter to Gregory XIV, for

[1] Mr. W. F. Dickes, however, reproduces it in his book, *Holbein's "Ambassadors" Unriddled*, p. 80, as a portrait by Holbein of the Count Palatine Philipp! Engraved by Vorsterman as a portrait of More by Holbein. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 225.

[2] *Athenæum*, June 19, 1886, No. 3060, p. 820.

he died in 1590, aged seventy-two, in which year Gregory XIV became Pope. North's story is very similar to the one told by Baldinucci.[1] The latter, who describes the picture as a stupendous portrait, says that Henry kept it in an apartment together with those of some other eminent men. "It happened that on the very day of the ex-chancellor's death (after the king had reproached her), the wicked Queen Anne Boleyn cast her eyes upon it, and seeing the expressive face of her enemy looking at her as if he were still living—she never forgave his refusal to be present at her wedding—she was seized with a feeling of either horror or remorse, and unable to endure the steady gaze and the reproaches of her own conscience, she threw open the window of the palace, and exclaiming, 'Oh me! the man seems to be still alive,' flung the picture into the street: a passer-by picked it up and carried it away, and eventually it found a resting-place in Rome, where in Baldinucci's time it was still preserved in the Palazzo de' Crescenzi."[2] If this story has any foundation in fact, it is possible that Circignano may have put the picture in order after it reached Rome; but it can hardly have been the one belonging to Mr. Huth, as Dr. Jessop suggested. Wornum was of opinion that this legendary work might possibly be identified with an unnamed portrait by Holbein mentioned by an earlier Italian writer than Baldinucci, Francesco Scannelli, who, in an account of "an ultramontane painter named Olbeno,"[3] after praising the portrait of Morette, then in the gallery of the Duke of Modena, for its exact imitation of nature, says: "A similar excellence is shown in the small portrait by the same master, now at Rome in the possession of Monsignor Campori." Mr. Wornum also suggested that this small work praised by Scannelli might be identical with the portrait of Sir Henry Wyat in the Louvre, which at the time he was writing (1867) was generally regarded as a portrait of More.

Holbein's work as a miniature painter is dealt with in a later chapter, but while speaking of the portraits of More, it is impossible to omit reference to the exceedingly fine miniature painting of him to which attention was first called by Dr. Williamson.[4] It was then in the possession of the Quicke family, of Newton St. Cyres, Devon;

[1] Quoted by Wornum, p. 248.
[2] Wornum, pp. 248, 249.
[3] *Il Microcosmo della Pittura*, 1657, ii. 265.
[4] *History of Portrait Miniatures*, 1904, vol. i. p. 8.

but in July 1905, it was sold at Messrs. Christie's by the order of the trustees of the late Mr. John Quicke, and passed into the collection of the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. In position, dress, and accessories it bears a close resemblance to Mr. Huth's picture, upon which it may have been based.[1] It is circular, $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. in diameter, painted on thin paper, mounted on a playing card, and is contained in a metal and enamel frame. On the back of the card, in a hand very little later than the date of the portrait, is written the one word "Holben," while on the reverse of the frame is inscribed "THOMAS MORUS CANCELLARIVS HOLBEIN PINX." The background is bright blue. For close upon one hundred years it had been in the house in Devonshire, and had attached to its frame a small scrap of paper, on which was written, in a script of the early Stuart period, the information as to whom it represented, and by whom it was painted. The Ropers were connected with the Quickes by marriage, and as the connection dates from a period soon after the death of Sir Thomas More, the family tradition which states that the portrait has been handed down from the time when the great statesman perished on the scaffold has every likelihood of being true.

It has usually been asserted that the portrait of Sir Thomas More is the only independent portrait of a member of the More family painted by Holbein, with the possible exception of the panel at Knole, which by some is regarded as a likeness of Margaret Roper. There was, however, a small panel portrait, 14 in. by 10 in., exhibited at the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition, 1910 (No. 106), as by Holbein, lent by General Lord Methuen, which is undoubtedly a portrait of Lady More. It was catalogued under the erroneous title of "Mrs. Anne Roper," with a note which stated that it "has also been thought to be a portrait by Mabuse, of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, mother of Henry VIII." There was no Mrs. Anne Roper in Holbein's day; and the "Anne" is probably a mistake for "Margaret" on the part of the person who first misnamed the picture. The portrait really represents Margaret Roper's stepmother, as a comparison with the head of Lady More in the Basel sketch conclusively proves. There is a strong likeness between the two, and the position of the figure, with the head slightly bent down, and an open book held

[1] Reproduced in Dr. Williamson's book, Pl. iii. No. 2, and in colours in the *édition de luxe* of Mr. Pierpont Morgan's Catalogue, No. 5; and by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 227 (1), who includes it among the copies after Holbein.

in both hands on her lap, is the same in both. It is a half-length figure, seated to the left, with a dark dress trimmed with fur and red undersleeves, black angular head-dress with black fall, and a white cap underneath. She wears a triple gold chain round her neck, with crucifix attached, and a medallion brooch with three pendant pearls. The background is a dark blue-green. The brush-work is weak and hesitating, but it is possibly a much-damaged and repainted original panel by Holbein, though practically nothing of the master's own handiwork is now visible. If not a badly-damaged original, it must be a nearly contemporary copy from a lost picture by him, rather than one taken from the figure in the Nostell Priory version. Curiously enough, the use of the name " Anne " in conjunction with Roper—Lady More's name was " Alice "—is also to be found on the back of a miniature after Holbein in the Royal Collection, which at one time, before the inscription was uncovered, was said to represent Queen Katherine of Aragon. It is inscribed in two lines—" Anna Roper Thomæ Mori Filia. W. Hollar pinxit post Holbeinium, 1652." Here the " Anne " is evidently a mistake for " Margaret " or " Mar.," perhaps made by Hollar himself when copying the original; or, possibly, the original may have been a portrait of Lady More, a companion miniature to the one already described of Sir Thomas, to which an erroneous title had become attached before Hollar was employed to copy it.[1]

The portrait of Margaret Roper at Knole, which for many years has been generally known as Queen Katherine of Aragon, was exhibited by Lord Sackville at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1909 (No. 44).[2] The same portrait was lent, as " Queen Katherine," to the National Portrait Exhibition in 1866 (No. 78), by the Countess Delawarr. It is probably a nearly contemporary copy of a lost original by Holbein, and corresponds closely, excepting for slight differences in the hands, with the figure in the Basel sketch. It is a three-quarters length, on panel, 25½ in. by 19½ in., the figure turned three-quarters to the left, with diamond-shaped hood embroidered with gold, a square-cut black and white dress, edged with jewels, over a transparent chemisette, and cloth of gold sleeves. A string of black beads and a

[1] In the exhibition of miniatures held at South Kensington in 1865 there was one of "Alicia, wife of Sir Thomas More," attributed to Holbein, lent by Mr. J. Heywood Hawkins (No. 1146).

[2] Reproduced in the *Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib. Catg.*, Pl. xiv; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 194.

fine gold chain are round her neck, and a cinquefoil jewel at her breast. She holds a book open with both hands, on a table in front of her. The inscription, " Queen Cathrine," is in an eighteenth-century hand.

There is a brilliant drawing of an English lady by Holbein in the collection bequeathed by Mr. George Salting to the nation (Pl. 79), which was included in the same exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club (No. 72), a study in black and red chalks, heightened with white, and reinforced with Indian ink, upon pale pink-tinted paper.[1] The sheet has been cut round the outline by some vandal, but the drawing itself is entirely free from the retouching which disfigures certain of the Windsor heads. The high lights on the cheek, nose, and eyes are put in with white, and red chalk is used sparingly on the lips and elsewhere. The band of hair which shows beneath the coif is washed with yellowish brown. It has been suggested by more than one critic that it is a portrait of Margaret Roper, but as Mr. Campbell Dodgson, who contributed a note upon it for the Vasari Society, points out, so far as the evidence of the Basel drawing goes, the identification appears possible, but not convincing. It is not one of the preliminary studies for the picture itself, which were done on white paper, and if it represents Margaret Roper, she must have sat again to Holbein after his return to England in 1532. According to the same authority, it is probably the " Portrait of a Lady," lot 48 in the Jonathan Richardson sale, 1746, in which case it was bought by Knapton, whose drawings were sold in 1804. Later on it was in the collections of the Marquis of Stafford and Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower. It is certainly one of the very finest Holbein drawings in existence. " No portrait-study of a woman," says Sir Claude Phillips, " even in the great Windsor series, equals this in the spiritual beauty which illumines and transforms—or rather interprets—a presentment of quiet and unforced realism. But rarely the great portraitist allows himself thus to lay bare for the beholder the inner workings of the soul ; as a rule he contents himself with a supreme truth which is not infrequently as difficult to unravel as Nature herself." [2]

Finally, there is a picture belonging to the Bray family of Shere, which, from an old inscription on the frame, is said to be a portrait of Margaret, whose daughter was one of the four wives of Sir Edward

[1] Reproduced by Vasari Society, Pt. i. No. 31 ; *Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib. Catg.*, Pl. xxix.
[2] *Daily Telegraph*, 23rd March 1910.

Bray.[1] The likeness to the Basel sketch, however, is not very evident, and the picture has no pretence to be by Holbein. The sitter wears a close-fitting white cap with long ends falling on her breast, and holds a rosary attached to a large circular ornament which forms part of her girdle. The background is a landscape, with a view of the bend of a wide river running between high cliffs.[2]

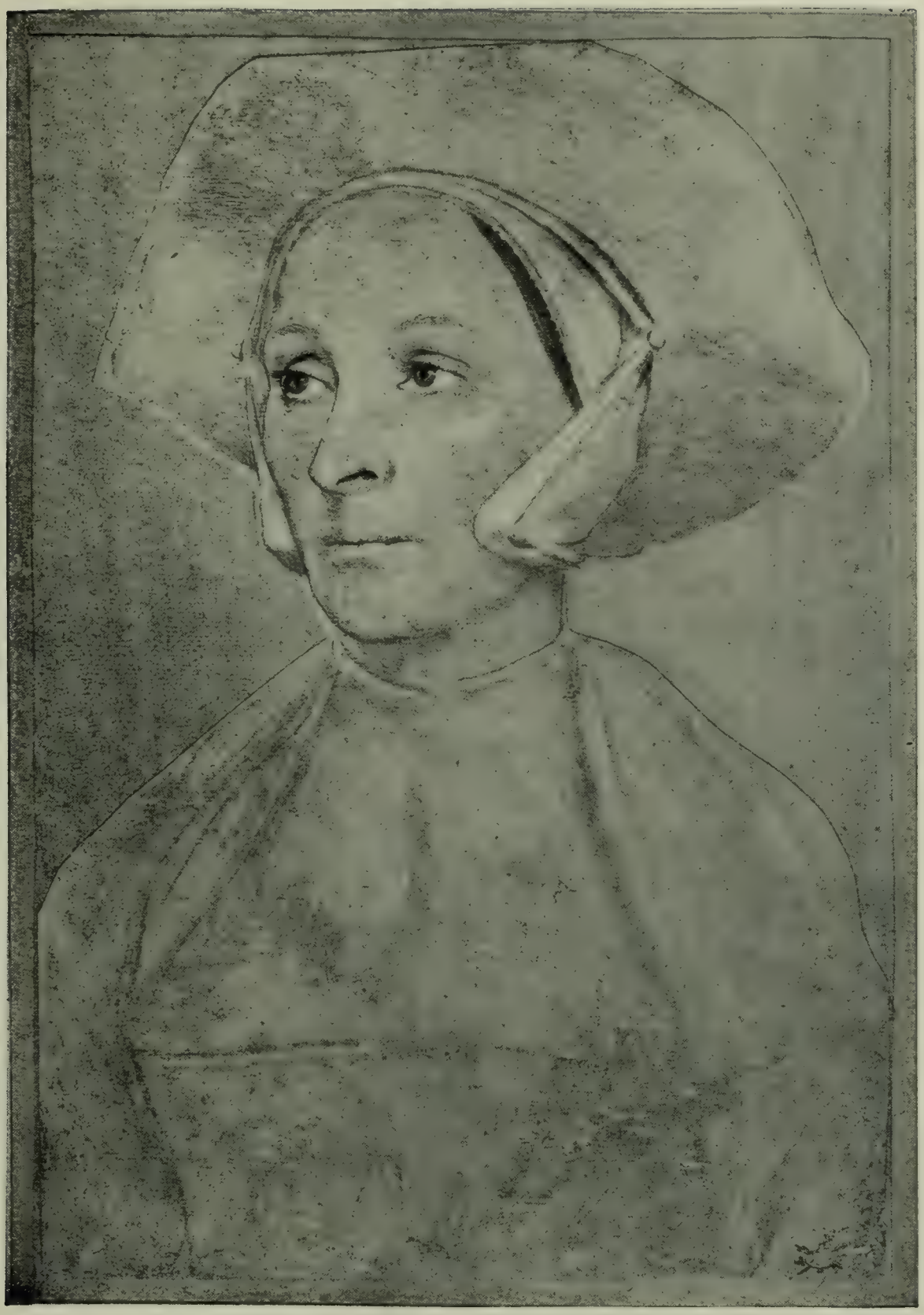
[1] Reproduced in *The Ancestor*, vi., June 1903.

[2] The drawing in the Windsor Collection inscribed "Lady Henegham" bears considerable likeness to the Margaret Roper of the Basel sketch, and some writers hold that it represents her, and that it is a study for the Family Group. The position, however, in the Windsor study is exactly reversed, the sitter being shown in profile to the right, so that it is not probable that it was a preliminary drawing for the big group. Though the resemblance is marked, it is not so close as that between the "Queen Katherine" portrait at Knole and the Basel sketch, and the same criticism applies to the ornaments and dress, which in the two last-named are identical, whereas the "Lady Henegham" drawing shows differences, particularly in the jewellery. See also vol. ii. p. 258. The question of the authorship of the various versions of the More Family Group is dealt with more fully in Appendix (I).

PORTRAIT OF AN ENGLISH LADY

Drawing in black and red chalk, and Indian ink

Salting Bequest, British Museum





Portrait of an Englishwoman, by Hans Holbein the Younger. Panel, actual size. (The Earl of Lonsdale)

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND: OTHER PORTRAITS AND DECORATIVE WORK

Holbein's work for the temporary Banqueting House at Greenwich—The "Plat of Tirwan"—Portraits of Sir Henry and Lady Guldeford—William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury—John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester—Thomas and John Godsalve—Niklaus Kratzer, the astronomer—Undated portraits—Sir Bryan Tuke—Reskimer—Sir Henry Wyat—Sir Thomas and Lady Eliot—Drawing of an unknown man at Chatsworth.

POSSIBLY one of the causes which prevented the immediate completion of the large picture of the More family in the spring of 1527 was the commission Holbein received at this time for decorative work of an important nature, for which he obtained payment from the royal purse. Early in 1527 negotiations were in progress between Henry VIII and Francis I for an alliance, which was to be strengthened in the future by the marriage of the Princess Mary, then eleven years of age, and heir-presumptive to the English throne, with either Francis himself or one of his sons. The ratification of this alliance was celebrated at Greenwich on Sunday, the 5th of May 1527, by a series of festivities with which Henry entertained the French ambassadors. A mass, at which the King and ambassadors swore to observe the league, was followed by a tournament, and, in the evening, a grand banquet, in a magnificent building, specially erected for the occasion, in the decoration of which there is every reason to believe that Holbein took a leading part.

Hall, in his *Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, published in 1548, gives a long description of this banqueting house, and its contents, from which a short extract may be quoted here :—

"The Kyng against that night had caused a banket house to bee made on the one syde of the tylt yarde at Grenewyche of an hundreth foote of length and xxx foote bredth, the roofe was purple cloth full of roses and Pomgarnettes, the wyndowes were al clere stories with currious monneles strangely wrought, the Jawe peces and crestes were

karved with Vinettes and trails of savage worke, and richely gilted with gold and Byse, thys woorke corbolying bare the candelstyckes of antyke woorke whiche bare little torchettes of white waxe, these candelstickes were polished lyke Aumbre : at the one syde was a haute place for herawldes and minstrelles." Then, after bestowing his admiration on the cupboards of gold and silver plate, he continues his description of the building : " At the nether ende were twoo broade arches upon thre Antike pillers all of gold burnished swaged and graven full of Gargills and Serpentes, supportying the edifices the Arches were vawted with Armorie, al of Bice and golde, and above the Arches were made many sondri Antikes and divises."

" When supper was done," he adds later, " the kyng, the quene and the ambassadors . . . rose and went out of the banket chambre bi the forsaied Arches, and when they were betwene the uttermoste dore and the Arches the kyng caused them to turne backe and loke on that syde of the Arches, and there they sawe how Tyrwin was beseged, and the very maner of every mans camp, very connyingly wrought, whiche woorke more pleased them then the remembrying of the thyng in dede. From thens they passed by a long galerie richely hanged into a chambre faire and large." In this chamber, after a Latin oration and other set recitations, some hours were spent in masking and dancing, after which a return was made to the banquet-house for a second supper. " And after that all was doen the king and all other went to rest, for the night was spent, and the day even at the breakyng. . . . These two houses . . . the kyng commaunded should stand still, for thre or foure daies, that al honest persones might see and beholde the houses and riches, and thether came a great nombre of people, to see and behold the riches and costely devices."

This temporary building was apparently the most elaborate of its kind erected in England during the reign of Henry VIII, and it may be taken for certain that Holbein had much to do with it, both as regards work from his own brush, and also in the supervision of a number of other painters and decorators employed upon it. The accounts of the expenses incurred in its building are still preserved in the Record Office, and abstracts from them are published in the *Calendars of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.* More detailed abstracts are given by Mr. F. M. Nichols, F.S.A., who went through the original documents most care-

fully, in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries, on March 31, 1898.[1]

Throughout these detailed accounts of the wages paid by Richard Gibson, there is constant mention of one "Master Hans," and however common such a Christian name may have been in Germany, there is no record of any other foreign artist in England at this period named Hans but Holbein, who elsewhere is more than once referred to as Master Hans. Sir Henry Guldeford, comptroller of the King's household, an intimate friend of More, and a correspondent of Erasmus, had official charge of the erection of this banquet-house, and his portrait was painted by Holbein in the same year, and possibly at about the same time, for Guldeford is represented as wearing his chain as a Knight of the Garter, which honour was bestowed upon him on April 24, 1527. He must thus have had full knowledge of Holbein's capabilities, and would naturally turn to him for assistance on this occasion, when everything had to be done in a hurry, and as many painters as possible pressed into the service. Then again, Sir Henry Wyat, treasurer of the Chamber, whom Holbein also painted during his first visit to England, was associated with Guldeford in the building of this "banketing-house," so that the painter would have a second friend at court. It seems practically certain, therefore, that Holbein was the "Master Hans" of the accounts.

Work was begun on the 15th January, 1527, and about a dozen painters were employed for the next three weeks, at wages ranging from 6*d.* to 12*d.* a day. Only one of them, Robert Wrytheoke, received a shilling a day. He was a maker of moulds and casts, and supplied the plaster figures and ornamental pillars. On Friday, the 8th February, the following entry appears for the first time :—

"Master Nycolas at the kyngs plessyer.

"Master Hans the day iiii.*s.*"[2]

This entry is repeated, with only four days' interval, until Saturday the 3rd of March. According to Mr. Nichols, the same distinction between the terms of the two painters' employment is kept up throughout all the entries, the meaning of which appears to be that while Holbein's payment was fixed by agreement at 4*s.* a day, the remunera-

[1] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, Second Series, vol. xvii. No. i. pp. 132-145, from which the quotations from Hall, and other facts in this chapter, have been taken.

[2] For these and the following extracts, see *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. ii. 3097-98, 3104, 3107.

tion of Master Nycolas was left to be subsequently settled at the discretion of his employers.

In the course of the work Holbein came in contact with many of the chief English painters and a number of the foreign artists in Henry's service, and it is interesting to note, as some indication of the estimation in which he was already held by certain of the court officials, that he was more highly paid than any of his associates. Among those who assisted in the work were John Browne, the King's serjeant-painter, who supplied much of the material; "Vincent Vulp and Ellys Carmyan, Italian painters," who received 20*s.* a week; John Demyans (Giovanni da Maiano) and the "Italian painters and gilders, Nicholas Florentine, at 2*s.*, and Domyngo (Domenico), at 16*d.* day and night." This Nicholas of Florence was probably the same man as the Master Nycolas mentioned above as associated with Holbein. Among the casters of lead employed were two other Italians, Archangell and Raphael, while John Rastall supplied "divers necessaries bought for the trimming of the Father of Heaven, lions, dragons, and greyhounds holding candlesticks." A number of other names are included, chiefly English mercers, embroiderers, saddlers, plumbers, hosiers, and other tradesmen.

Detailed accounts of the materials used are given, and frequent entries occur of colours "spent by Master Hans and his company on the roof"—"Mr. Hans and the painters on the four cloths"—"Black collars for Mr. Hans, 3*s.* 4*d.*"—and so on. These extracts seem to show that Holbein was employed to direct all the painters and gilders engaged, and no doubt the decorations were largely of his design. It has been impossible, so far, to identify Master Nycolas, then in the King's service, who worked with him. He cannot have been Nicolas Bellin, who was occupied at Fontainebleau at this period, and did not visit England until some ten years later. The only other Italian named Nicolas mentioned in the State Papers was Nicolas Lasora, who, in 1532, was employed on the decoration of Westminster Palace.[1]

Holbein and Nycolas were thus occupied at Greenwich for nineteen days, with the interval of one Sunday's rest, having been kept at work

[1] *C.L.P.*, v. 952. See p. 262. The name suggests Nicholas Lysard or Lyzarde, serjeant-painter to Queen Elizabeth, who was also in the service of Henry and Edward VI. He died in 1570, and has been usually regarded as an Englishman. See vol. ii., pp. 309–10. Possibly, however, Lasora was not an Italian. He may have been the "Nic. Leysure, a German," mentioned in the royal accounts, in September 1539, as receiving payment under a warrant for 200 *cr. soleil* for life.

during two other Sundays, when the ordinary workmen were taking holiday. Holbein's daily attendance at the Banqueting House appears to have ceased on Sunday, the 3rd of March, though this was by no means the end of his connection with the decoration of the building. For the next month he was busily engaged either in London or at Chelsea in painting a large composition for the decoration of the back of the triumphal arch—the picture spoken of in such high terms by Hall, showing "how Tyrwin was beseged." This picture was so far advanced by the 11th March that it and a number of other painted canvases were placed temporarily in position for the inspection of the King. Holbein had completed his particular share in the work by the 4th of April, when the picture was fetched from London by Lewis Demoron, who received 16*d.*, "for his bote-hire to London for fetching of the plat of Tirwan." The complete decoration of the building was not finished till the 5th May, on the eve of the festivities, and no doubt Holbein resumed his supervision, though it is not mentioned in the accounts. For his large painting, which occupied him for about three weeks, he received the payment of £4, 10*s.*, which is equal to about £60 or £70 of modern money. The entry in the accounts runs as follows: "Paid to Master Hans for the payneting of the plat of Tirwan which standeth on the baksyde of the grete arche, in grete iiij*l.* xs."—the words "in grete" meaning that he received a sum down for the work, instead of a daily wage.

Mr. F. M. Nichols first called attention to this work of Holbein's in *The Hall of Lawford Hall*, published in 1891, and in the same year Mr. Alfred Beaver, in his *Memorials of Old Chelsea*, referred to some of the details in Dr. Brewer's abstracts. Mr. Beaver was of opinion that the old picture of the "Battle of Spurs" at Hampton Court, in earlier days attributed to Holbein, was the very "plat of Tirwan" in question. This, however, is not correct. "The Battle of Spurs" was certainly not painted by Holbein, but by some much inferior artist. It has been attributed to Vincent Volpe and other of the minor foreign artists then in England, and probably was painted in commemoration of the victory shortly after the battle itself, which took place in 1513. It is on wood, and measures 4 ft. 4 in. high by 8 ft. 6 in. wide, whereas Holbein's picture was on canvas, and was evidently much larger, for we learn from Richard Gibson's accounts that it took twenty-four ells of fine canvas "for the lyning of the

baksyde of the grete Arche wheruppon Tirwin is staynyd," at a cost of 15 shillings. "It thus appears," says Mr. Nichols, "that about 90 feet of fine canvas (which we may suppose to have been a yard or not much less in width) was required to cover the back of the arch, and the main decoration of this widespread surface of some 20 or 30 square yards appears to have been the picture in question."

The two pictures differed materially in subject. It is to be gathered from Hall's account that Holbein's painting represented the actual siege of Terouenne, whereas the Hampton Court panel shows the pursuit of the French cavalry and their surrender to the English, though the town of Terouenne, with its fortifications and houses, is shown plainly in the middle distance. In any case the subject, the defeat of the French by the English, seems to have been a singularly inappropriate one for the particular occasion for which it was painted, the ratification of a solemn treaty between England and France, and there was little delicacy in Henry's humour in pointing it out to his guests! Even Hall intimates that they were more pleased with the painting of it than with the remembrance of the incident. The subject may have been suggested by Guldeford, who was Henry's standard-bearer at Terouenne, and knighted after Tournay. The picture itself has disappeared, like so many of Holbein's large decorative works; not even a study for it has been so far discovered.

It is somewhat extraordinary, considering Henry's evident appreciation of this "plat," and the interest he took in the general decoration of the Banqueting House, that Holbein was not at once taken into the royal service. His work at Greenwich must have afforded ample proof of his powers as an artist, and the King was only too anxious to offer inducements to the best foreign painters to settle in England. It has been suggested that this lack of recognition was due to jealousy on the part of certain other painters then employed about the Court, but this does not appear a very plausible explanation, for Henry was by no means a man to be influenced in this way. This lack of royal patronage is all the more extraordinary when it is remembered that at the time Holbein was at work as a portrait-painter for several of Henry's favourite servants, and that in all probability the portrait of More, if not others, had been seen by the King, who is said to have been fond of paying unexpected visits to the future Lord Chancellor at Chelsea. Whatever the reason, however, the fact remains

that Holbein's name does not appear in the royal accounts until much later, nor is there any portrait of the King by him of this date, or of Queen Katherine, or any other evidence to show that he held any official position at Court during his first residence in England.

There are only three portraits by Holbein which bear the date 1527—those of Sir Thomas More, Sir Henry Guldeford, and Archbishop Warham; and only two of the date 1528—Niklaus Kratzer, the King's German astronomer, and the double portrait of Thomas Godsalve of Norwich, and his son John, though several others, undated, may be ascribed to this period with some certainty. The portrait of Guldeford (Pl. 80),[1] in the royal collection at Windsor Castle, was probably begun shortly after Holbein's work at Greenwich was finished, and was painted to commemorate the sitter's advancement as a Knight of the Garter on April 24, a few days before the festivities took place, as he is wearing the chain of the order across his shoulders.

He is shown at half-length, the body turned slightly to the spectator's right, the light coming in from the left. He is clean shaven, with bushy hair covering his ears, and wears a doublet of patterned cloth of gold, cut square, above a white shirt. Over it is a dark gown with a wide collar of brown fur and short sleeves, leaving the gold sleeves of his doublet uncovered. The thumb of his left hand is thrust into his girdle, and in his right hand he holds the white staff of his office as Comptroller of the Household. On the brim of his flat black cap is a circular medallion the design on which cannot now be deciphered. In the Print Room of the British Museum, however, there is an etching of this hat-badge, or "singular ornament on an escutcheon," as a note upon the print terms it, which apparently was made when the picture was at Kensington Palace early in the eighteenth century, from which it appears that it represented a clock, a pair of compasses, and other instruments. Guldeford wears a thin double gold chain round his neck, the lower part of which is hidden by his doublet, and over his shoulders the Collar of the Order of the Garter with the pendant George. The background is dark green, with a dark green curtain on the spectator's right, hanging by rings on an iron rod, which extends right across the upper part of the picture, and on the

[1] Woltmann, 264. Reproduced by Law, *Holbein's Pictures at Windsor Castle*, Pl. i.; Davies, p. 130; Knackfuss, fig. 100; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 72.

left a sprig of vine-tree foliage. In the upper left-hand corner is painted a white label, on which is inscribed in cursive letters : " ANNO D. MCCCCCXXVII. ETATIS SUÆ XL IX." The age painted on the cartel is somewhat perplexing, as it indicates that the sitter was forty-nine in 1527, whereas during the proceedings relating to the divorce of Queen Katherine,[1] Guldeford himself declared that his age in 1529, two years later, was only forty. Mr. Law suggests as a solution that at some time or other, in some process of restoration, the figures have been tampered with, and the fact that the XL is separated from the IX by a blank space of about a figure in width, adds some probability to his suggestion, while the face seems scarcely to be that of a man as old as forty-nine.[2]

The masterly original drawing for this portrait, in the Windsor Collection,[3] is inscribed " Harry Guldeford Knight," and this, according to the same writer, may be the sole authority for the name bestowed on the picture, the untrustworthiness of some of these inscriptions being well known. Hollar's engraving of the portrait, however, which was made in 1647, is inscribed with the name of Guldeford ; and the fact that there is a companion engraving of his wife, entitled " the Lady Guldeforde," and inscribed " Holbein pinxit, W. Hollar fecit, ex collectione Arundeliana A° 1647, Ætatis 28, A° 1527," confirms the claims of this picture to be an authentic portrait of Sir Henry Guldeford. Both portraits were in the Arundel Collection, and are entered in the 1655 inventory as " Ritratto del Cavaglier Guildford " and " Ritratto della moglie sua." They came to the Earl with other works by Holbein from the Lumley Collection. In addition to these portraits, Lord Arundel also possessed a miniature or small oil painting of Guldeford—" Ritratto del Cavaglier Guiltfort in piccolo." It is possible that this small portrait is the one which Hollar copied, as his engravings of Guldeford and his wife are both roundels.

There is a miniature at Windsor, a portrait obviously of the same man, in which the face is younger, and the collar of the Garter is absent, which apparently was painted some years before Holbein came to England, and may be the one formerly in the Arundel Collec-

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. iii. 5774.

[2] Law, *Holbein's Pictures*, &c., p. 3.

[3] Woltmann, 282 ; Wornum, i. 1 ; Sir R. Holmes, i. 11. Reproduced by Davies, p. 210. A second fine drawing of Guldeford, on a reddish ground, a different version from the one at Windsor, was in Mr. J. P. Heseltine's collection of drawings, dispersed in 1912.

SIR HENRY GULDEFORD

1527

Windsor Castle



tion.[1] A small copy of the Windsor picture, inscribed "Ser. Harry Gylldford," was lent to the Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (No. 146), by the Hon. H. Tyrwhitt Wilson.[2] Guldeford was the only son of Sir Richard Guldeford, K.G., by his second wife, Joan, sister of Sir Nicholas Vaux, afterwards Lord Vaux of Harrowden. He was a great favourite of the King's, and his companion in all his sports and pastimes. He received many honours from the royal hands, and became successively Squire of the Body, King's Standard-Bearer, Knight Banneret, Master of the Revels, Comptroller of the Household, and Master of the Horse. He remained in high favour with Henry, in spite of the enmity of Anne Boleyn, caused by his opposition to the divorce except after a papal sentence. He died in 1533, shortly after Holbein's second arrival in England.

This portrait, which is one of the finest of Holbein's works now in the Royal Collection, is a dignified and life-like representation, full of character, while the details of the rich and elaborate dress, and the sumptuous collar of the Garter, are painted with exquisite truth and care. The face has a peculiar yellow tint, concerning which Woltmann remarks: "It has been taken for granted that the head has been painted over; but such is not the case—on the contrary, it is in a remarkably good state of preservation. The colour must have been a peculiarity of the person portrayed. This may be inferred from its being indicated in a like manner in the drawing at Windsor Castle."[3]

Little is known of the history of the panel. In 1590 it, or a replica of it, was in the possession of Lord Lumley at Lumley Castle, together with the companion panel of Lady Guldeford, and it is described in the inventory as "Of Sir Henry Guilfourd, Coumptroller to K'. H'. 8, drawne by Haunce Holbyn." It reappears, as noted above, in the seventeenth century in the Earl of Arundel's Collection, while in the eighteenth more than one reference to it in contemporary literature shows that it was then in Kensington Palace.[4] It was engraved in a small circle in Anstis' *Order of the Garter*, 1724, in which his age

[1] Mr. Lionel Cust notes a roundel painting of Guldeford in the collection of Lord Kinnaird at Rossie Priory (*Burl. Mag.*, August 1912, p. 258).

[2] On panel, 25½ in. × 20½ in.

[3] Woltmann, "Holbein at the National Portrait Gallery," *Fortnightly Review*, vol. vi. 1866, p. 160; also *Life*, i. 344.

[4] *The English Connoisseur*, 1776, vol. i. p. 145; Dodsley's *London and its Environs Described*, vol. iii. p. 268 (quoted by Mr. Law, p. 4).

is given as forty; by Vertue in 1726 for Knight's *Life of Erasmus*, and again in 1791 by Schiavonetti, after a drawing by S. Harding, and described as "from an original picture by Holbein in the possession of Sir William Burrell"—that is, from the copy, possibly an almost contemporary one,[1] which was destroyed in the Knepp Castle fire in January 1904, together with one of Lady Guldeford, and other replicas of well-known Holbein portraits.

The portrait of Lady Guldeford,[2] lent by Mr. Frewen to the National Portrait Exhibition at South Kensington in 1868, and to the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition, 1880 (No. 171), was at Lumley Castle in 1590, and is entered in the inventory as "Of the La. Guilfourd, wife to Sir Harry Guilfourd, Coumptroller, drawne by Haunce Holbyn"; and at a later period was in the Duke of Buckingham's Collection at Stowe. This once fine portrait has been much rubbed, repaired, and over-varnished, but according to Sir George Scharf and the late Mr. F. G. Stephens, its genuineness as a work of Holbein is unquestionable. This is proved, says the latter,[3] "by the vigorous expression of the penetrating eyes of the lady, the still evident luminosity of the flesh, the imperiousness of the delicately cut nostrils, the exquisite execution of the details, and the energy imparted to the much injured hands. The fine painting of the sleeve of gold illustrates the practice of Holbein and his school in employing leaf gold to impart lustre to the fabric. . . . The best proof of the genuineness of 'Lady Guildford' is the exquisite execution of the branch of vine in the background, a feature which appears in several of Holbein's paintings. . . . The Guildford portraits are both distinguished by the energy of the motives they exhibit, the precision, mastery, and complete softness of the modelling; this is the unfailing test of the genuineness of work ascribed to Holbein. . . . Another test is supplied by the flossy silk-like character of the hair and beards of the sitters whenever the works have, as in the 'Reskimer,' escaped restoration." This portrait is now in the collection of Mr. W. C. Vanderbilt, New York; and there is a good early miniature copy of it in the possession of Mrs. Joseph,[4] which in earlier days was said to represent Katherine of Aragon. That it is a portrait of Lady Guldeford, however, is proved by Hollar's engraving,[5] with which it is in close agree-

[1] See Law, p. 4. [2] Woltmann, 206. [3] *Athenæum*, 17th January 1880.
[4] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 227 (2).
[5] Parthey, 1410. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 260.

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JOHN FISHER

Bishop of Rochester

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

WINDSOR CASTLE

UNKNOWN ENGLISH LADY

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

BASEL GALLERY

UNKNOWN ENGLISHMAN

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

UNKNOWN ENGLISH LADY

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

BASEL GALLERY





ment. There is a fine drawing of an English lady, in black and coloured chalks, in the Basel Collection (Pl. 81 (2)),[1] which appears to be a study for this portrait, though, if so, Holbein made several slight alterations when he came to paint the picture. It shows the six gold bands or chains which are looped across the lady's breast and carried over the shoulders, and the head-dress is the same. There is a second study of a lady of Henry VIII's Court at Basel (Pl. 82 (2)),[2] also in black and coloured chalks, which has considerable facial likeness to Lady Guldeford, though there are slight differences in the ornamentation of the angular head-dress and bodice. Two links of a heavy chain are drawn in detail on the breast. In the same collection there is a portrait drawing of this lady's husband (Pl. 82 (1)),[3] which in turn bears a considerable resemblance to the Windsor head of Guldeford, while the dress, cap, and bushy hair over the ears are the same. It is possible that these two drawings represent Sir Henry and his wife.

One of the finest of the earlier drawings in the Windsor Collection is the magnificent head of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury,[4] which, though badly rubbed and damaged, remains a wonderful example of the truth and vividness of Holbein's portraiture. It is on unprimed paper, 17 in. high by 12 in. wide. It was natural that the painter should turn to Warham for employment, not only through his close friendship with Sir Thomas More, but as the friend also and generous patron of Erasmus; and, no doubt, the artist carried with him from Basel a letter of recommendation from the latter, who also some little time before had sent his own portrait by Holbein as a gift to the Archbishop. Warham was seventy years old when Holbein painted him, and had long since retired from all active political life, having relinquished his post as Lord Chancellor to Wolsey in 1515. He still, however, retained his high ecclesiastical office, in spite of more than one indignity put upon him by the Cardinal. He was a leading representative of the older age then passing away, and his last days were far from happy ones.

There are two versions of Holbein's portrait of him, almost identical, and both based upon the Windsor drawing, one in Lambeth Palace[5]

[1] Woltmann, 32. Reproduced by Davies, p. 224; Knackfuss, fig. 105; Mantz, p. 175.
[2] Woltmann, 37. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 11. [3] Woltmann, 36.
[4] Woltmann, 281; Wornum, i. 2; Sir R. Holmes, i. 12. Reproduced by Davies, p. 126; Knackfuss, fig. 96.
[5] Woltmann, 208. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 70.

and the other in the Louvre (Pl. 83).[1] He is represented at half-length, seated, turned towards the left, his hands resting on a cushion covered with gold brocade. He is dressed in his episcopal robes, with a deep fur collar, and a black, closely-fitting cap. On the spectator's right, on the table, is an open service book, and farther back on a shelf, behind the sitter's left shoulder, are other books and his jewelled mitre; and to the left a magnificent crucifix of gold and jewels. The background consists of a curtain, which is yellowish brown in the Lambeth picture, and green in the Louvre version. The latter is the more brilliant and harmonious in colouring, and painted in a thicker impasto, the Lambeth example being greyer in tone and more dryly executed, and, perhaps, more carefully modelled. Both have suffered somewhat from the passage of time, more particularly in the face, but both are evidently from Holbein's own hand, and are masterly studies of character, representing the wrinkled old man, saddened by adversities, and by the modern movements which he had not strength to stem, but always kindly and generous to all scholars and others who needed his help, and a sincere lover of learning. Both pictures have a cartel in the top right-hand corner with the inscription "Anno Dm̄. MDxxvij. Etatis sue LXX.," and round the base of the crucifix the words "AVXILIVM MEVM A DEO" (My help is from God). In the execution of the numerous details of the ornaments, the jewels decorating the mitre, the patterns of the embroideries, the lettering, and particularly in the figure of Christ on the crucifix, the mastery of Holbein's brush is everywhere in evidence. They are drawn with the utmost delicacy and truth, and while adding to the sumptuousness of the picture in no way detract the attention from the nobility and dignity of the portrait itself.

The Lambeth version is said to have been presented to Warham by Sir Thomas More or by Holbein himself, though there is no reason to suppose that it was not paid for in the usual way by the sitter. "It was lost during the civil wars, but was recovered again, as was supposed, by Sir William Dugdale, who restored it to Lambeth in the time of Archbishop Sancroft."[2] Walpole states that "Archbishop Parker entailed this, and another of Erasmus, on his successors; they were stolen in the civil war, but Juxon repurchased the

[1] Woltmann, 225. Reproduced by Davies, p. 126; Knackfuss, fig. 97; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 71.
[2] Wornum, p. 218, quoting from Lysons and Brayley.

WILLIAM WARHAM, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

1527

Louvre, Paris



former."[1] The "Erasmus," which did not return to its original resting-place, was, no doubt, the one by Holbein sent over by the sitter as a present to Warham. The same writer says that the "Warham" was at one time in De Loo's collection, and was afterwards in the possession of Sir Walter Cope, who had several works by Holbein, which passed by marriage to the Earl of Holland. The history of the Louvre portrait is not known, but it belonged at one time to the Newton family, and later on to Louis XIV. It is possible that it was painted for Erasmus, and that it is the version which belonged to the Earl of Arundel, which is entered in the 1655 inventory as "Warramus Vescovo de Canterbury." The Louvre picture, which is the larger of the two, is considered by some critics to be the original painting, the Lambeth version being a replica from Holbein's brush; others hold that the latter is the original and the better work of the two, but the point is not easy of solution unless the two pictures could be exhibited side by side. There are two other versions of the portrait at Lambeth Palace, but both are inferior copies. A panel of far higher qualities was lent by Viscount Dillon to the Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (No. 107),[2] and to the Oxford Exhibition, 1904 (No. 21).[3] This picture, which is an almost exact replica of the Louvre and Lambeth examples, has considerable claims to be considered an original work which has suffered, more particularly in the face and hands, from repainting. It has a beautifully rich golden tone, and certain of the details, more particularly the little gilded figure of Christ on the crucifix, are drawn with too great a mastery to be from the hand of any copyist. The writing on the cartellino in the background is also fine and full of character, very unlike the work of an imitator. Some lack of strength in the handling and characterisation of face and hands may, however, point to a good, contemporary worker. Evelyn, in his *Diary*, 1664, mentions this portrait at Ditchley as a head of a Pope.

Another high ecclesiastic, and friend of Erasmus and More, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was painted by Holbein during his first visit to England, probably at about the same time as Warham. Unfortunately the picture itself is missing, but three preliminary drawings

[1] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, 1888, i. 79.
[2] Reproduced in the illustrated edition of Catalogue, p. 64.
[3] Reproduced in the illustrated edition of the Oxford Catalogue.

for it are in existence, one at Windsor (Pl. 81 (1)), a second in the British Museum, and the third until recently in the possession of Mr. J. P. Heseltine. The first,[1] in black and coloured chalks, is, perhaps, the finest, the somewhat hard, ascetic character of the face being rendered with extraordinary expression with a few bold and forceful touches. The lines of the body and dress are merely indicated in outline. He is wearing the close-fitting black doctor's cap, and the face, almost in full, is turned slightly to the spectator's left. At the bottom of the study is the inscription, " Il Epyscop° de resester fo tagliato il Cap° l'an° 1535 " (The Bishop of Rochester beheaded in 1535), which seems to indicate that the drawing was once in the possession of some Italian. The drawing in the British Museum [2] is more carefully finished, and was probably made from the Windsor sketch. It was once in the Richardson Collection, and was bequeathed to the Museum by the Rev. C. M. Cracherode. It has no inscription. The powerful drawing which formed part of the Heseltine collection, dispersed in 1912, is on a reddish ground.

In this drawing Holbein has accomplished, with the simplest means, one of his finest and most subtle studies of character. The pale face, and thin, determined lips, with a faint, scornful smile upon them, and the brightness of the eyes, still undimmed in spite of his age, fully express the character of one who was ever ready to do battle for his opinions, and to die rather than betray his convictions. Mingled with this obstinacy the painter has expressed that kindliness towards all who came in contact with him, which Erasmus extolled so highly, and that personal purity of life which, together with his profound learning, formed one of his most striking characteristics. Froude says of him : " Fisher was the only one of the prelates for whom it is possible to feel esteem. He was weak, superstitious, pedantic, and even cruel towards the Protestants. But he was a sincere man, living in honest fear of evil, so far as he understood what evil was, and he could rise above the menaces of temporal suffering under which his brethren of the episcopal bench sank so rapidly into humility and subjection." [3]

As stated above, the portrait which Holbein must evidently have

[1] Woltmann, 283 ; Wornum, i. 24 ; Sir R. Holmes, i. 13. Reproduced by Davies, p. 128 ; Knackfuss, fig. 98.

[2] British Museum, 9 ; Woltmann, 198. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 24.

[3] Froude, *Henry VIII*, i. 301.

painted from this preliminary study has disappeared. The picture in St. John's College, Cambridge, which was lent to the Tudor Exhibition in 1890 (No. 138), was ascribed to Holbein in the catalogue, but is not by him, though it may be a copy of the lost original. He is shown with a staff in one hand and a glove in the other, and it is inscribed " A° Ætatis 74," which, as Fisher was born in 1456, would date the panel 1528. Dallaway, in his annotations to Walpole, notes another version at Didlington, Norfolk.[1] There was a second portrait of Fisher in the Tudor Exhibition (No. 61), lent by the Hon. H. Tyrwhitt Wilson, a half-length, holding a prayer book in both hands.

Only two paintings by Holbein are known with the date 1528—the double portrait in the Dresden Gallery and the " Kratzer " in the Louvre. The former,[2] a small square panel (Pl. 84), represents Thomas Godsalve, of Norwich, and his son John, afterwards knighted. The figures, considerably less than life-size, are shown to the waist, seated at a table, turned slightly to the spectator's right. The father, a ruddy-faced old man, dressed in the usual black cap and dark overcoat or robe with a heavy fur collar, holds a quill pen, with both hands resting on a sheet of paper in front of him, on which he has just written : " Thomas Godsalve de Norwico Etatis sue anno quadragesimo septo." The son, dressed in a similar costume, is seated on the spectator's left, a little behind his father. He wears no cap upon his dark hair, which, like the older man's, is long, hiding the ears, and cut straight across the forehead. In his left hand, partly concealed in the folds of his cloak, he holds a paper. Both men are clean shaven, and wear white shirts, that of the son being decorated round the neck with black Spanish work. An inkpot is on the table, and in the left upper corner, above Sir John's head, a cartellino is affixed to the plain background bearing the date—" Anno Dm. M. D. xxviij." The picture is a fine example of Holbein's work at this period, and is in an excellent state of preservation.[3] There is no drawing of Thomas Godsalve among the Windsor studies, but of the son there is an exceptionally fine one (Pl. 85).[4] It is carried out in body-colours, and is much further ad-

[1] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, i. p. 81.

[2] Woltmann, 144. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 103 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 74.

[3] It was at one time in the Arundel Collection, and is entered in the 1655 inventory as "2 Ritratti in un quadro col nome de Thomas Godsalve." It was purchased for Dresden in Paris in 1749.

[4] Woltmann, 286 ; Wornum, i. 31 ; Sir R. Holmes, i. 36. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 25 ; Davies, p. 218.

vanced than the other drawings in the collection, and, though somewhat rubbed, is a most masterly example of Holbein's veracity of portraiture. It cannot be regarded, however, with certainty, as a preliminary study for the Dresden picture for two reasons. In the first place, the sitter appears to be several years older than in that picture, and although the figure is seated and the position of the body is much the same, the poise of the head is different, and the face is turned more directly towards the spectator, while the hands, holding a sheet of paper, rest on a table or rail in front of him; and in the second place, it is practically a finished drawing, and is perhaps an example of Holbein's occasional practice of preparing his portraits on paper or parchment, which he afterwards fastened to the panel before giving them the final touches. He wears a coat of violet open in front and showing the white shirt, and over it a black gown trimmed with yellow sable, and a black cap with a circular badge, of which the design is not indicated. The hair and eyebrows are finished with a hair pencil. The background is a plain one of azure blue. He has a thin face, a large and sharp nose, and blue eyes, with a scanty growth of beard on his shaven chin. He gazes at the spectator with a serious, thoughtful expression; in which Woltmann saw something puritanical, no doubt because Godsalve, as he notes, presented the King with a New Testament as a New Year's gift in 1539.[1] In the following year he gave a perfumed box. Blomefield[2] mentions this drawing as being in his time in the Closet at Kensington Palace. There is a miniature of Godsalve in the Bodleian Library.

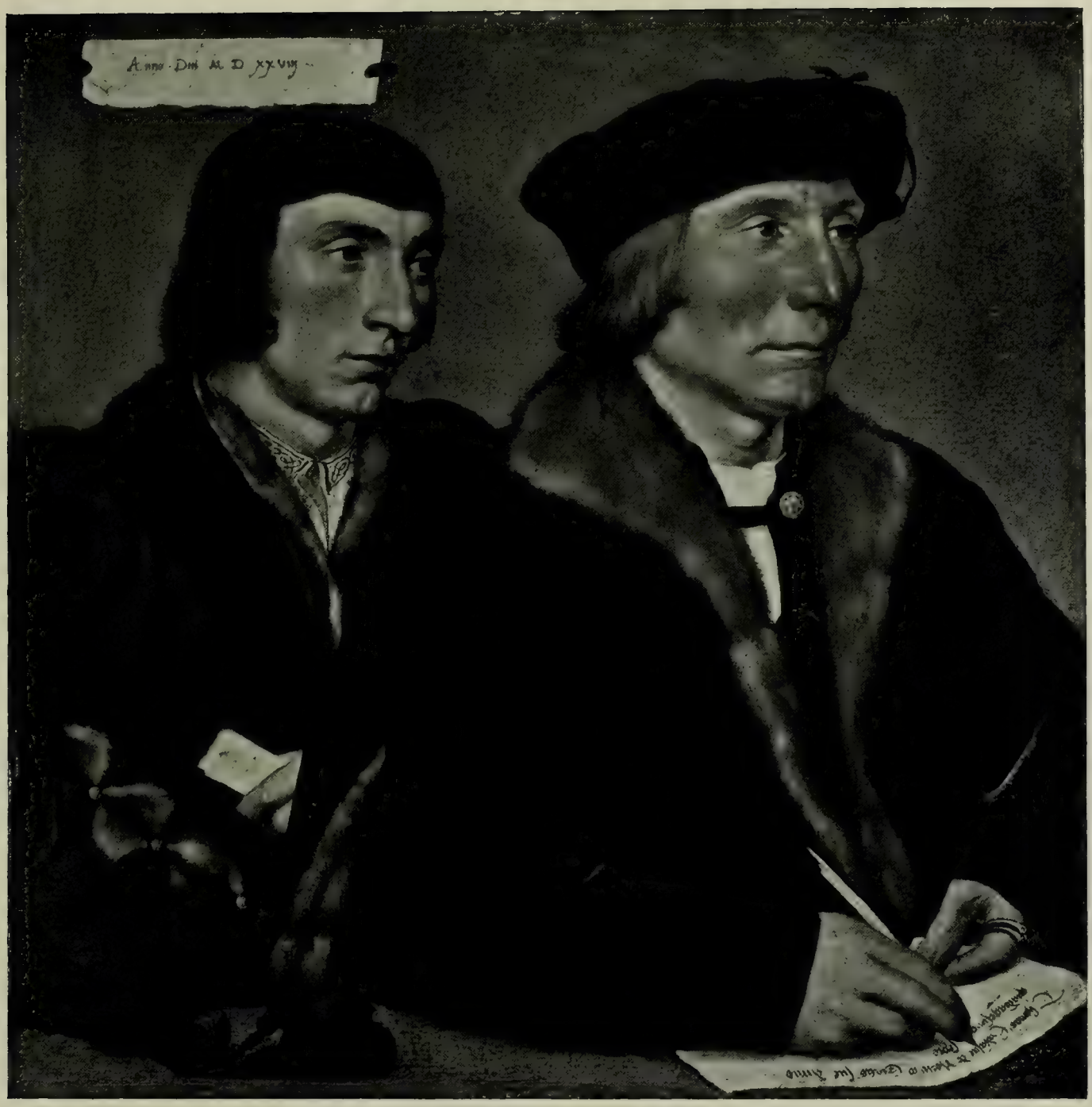
The father, Thomas Godsalve, who died in 1542, was registrar of the consistory court at Norwich, and the owner of landed property in Norfolk. He was an intimate friend of Thomas Cromwell. In a letter to the latter, dated Norwich, November 6, 1531, after thanking Cromwell for kindnesses shown to his son, he says: "I send you half a dozen swans of my wife's feeding";[3] and a year or two later he sends "six swans and a maund with pears of my own grafting."[4] The son, John Godsalve, who died in 1556, became Clerk of the Signet to Henry VIII, and was present at the siege of Boulogne. He was knighted at the coronation of Edward VI, and a year or two later was made Comptroller of the Mint. Various letters from him are

[1] Woltmann, i. 345.
[2] *Norfolk*, vii. 214.
[3] *C.L.P.*, v. 514.
[4] *C.L.P.*, vii. 1189 (25th Sept. 1534).

THOMAS AND JOHN GODSALVE

1528

Royal Picture Gallery, Dresden


Anno · Dm M D XXVIJ

included in the Calendars of State Papers. In one of them (1533), addressed to Eustace, clerk of the works at Hampton Court, he appears in the character of a "snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." "Send me," he writes, "as many golden balls as you can conveniently procure, and such fanes (vanes ?) and other things at your pleasure. Help the bearer into the spicery to have an antique which I left there; of which he has the key. Send me also the head under the stair, and whatsoever other things your gentle heart can lovingly depart from."[1] John Godsalve had some connection with the Steelyard, a number of whose merchants were painted by Holbein, for in November 1532, he and one William Blakenhall received a grant in survivorship of the office of common meter of all cloths of gold and silver tissue, "tynsett," satin, damask, and other cloths and canvas of aliens and others called "foreyns," *alias* "le Stilliarde," in the city of London, with the usual fees, &c.[2] He also obtained a small share of the plunder from the monasteries, and, in July 1534, an annuity of £8 "to him and his heirs for ever out of the issues of the manor of Stokesly, in Rydham, Norfolk, in the King's hands by the attainder of Thomas, cardinal of York."[3] In 1535 he received the offices of Constable and Keeper of the Castle and Gaol of Norwich, succeeding Sir Henry Wyat and Sir Thomas Boleyn in the posts.[4]

The portrait of Niklaus Kratzer,[5] of Munich, Henry's German astronomer, in the Louvre (Pl. 86), is a half-length figure placed behind a table, which is covered with the instruments of his profession. He wears the usual flat black cap, and a black coat or doublet open at the neck, showing a glimpse of a red under-garment and white shirt, and over all the prevailing dark overcoat or gown with fur collar. In his right hand he holds a pair of compasses or dividers, and in his left a decagonal sundial, like the one shown in the "Ambassadors" picture. Behind him on the right various mathematical and astronomical instruments are hanging on the wall, and others, including a cylindrical sundial and an astrolabe, are placed on a shelf on the left. Among the numerous objects on the table are scales and rulers, scissors, and his seal, together with a sheet of paper with a Latin inscription giving his name, his age, forty-one, and the date 1528. Part of this

[1] *C.L.P.*, vi. 576.
[2] *C.L.P.*, v. 1598 (12).
[3] *C.L.P.*, vii. 1026 (2).
[4] *C.L.P.*, viii. 802 (26).
[5] Woltmann, 226. Reproduced by Davies, p. 132; Knackfuss, fig. 102; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 73.

inscription is confused and injured, and Holbein's Latin was not of the best. The Louvre catalogue gives the reading as: "Imago ad vivam effigiem expressa Nicolai Kratzeri monacenssis q. (qui) bauarg. (bavarus) erat quadragessimū . . . annū tpfē (tempore) ilio gplebat (complebat) 1528." The illegible word after "quadragessimū" is given as "primo" in the replica mentioned below. The light falls from the right on his face, which, though rather heavy in features, is an interesting one, with an indication of humour about the eyes and mouth, which is in accord with a contemporary description of him in one of the letters of Nicolas Bourbon, the poet, another of Holbein's friends. The numerous instruments and accessories are depicted with all the truth and loving care in which Holbein delighted. Carel van Mander, who saw the picture in London when in the possession of Andries de Loo, and speaks of it as "een feer goedt Conterfeytsel en meesterlijck ghedan," calls particular attention to the beauty with which the instruments are delineated. Kratzer was the hero of the story told by the same writer. When asked by King Henry why he spoke English so badly, he replied, "Pardon, your Majesty, but how can a man learn English in thirty years?"

Little is known about the history of the picture, which has suffered somewhat severely from the passage of time. As noted, it was once in the possession of De Loo, together with the Warham, the Thomas Cromwell, one of the versions of Erasmus, and the More family group.[1] According to Wornum,[2] it was formerly at Holland House;[3] and Walpole states, erroneously, that there is a drawing for it among the Windsor heads.[4] A replica or good contemporary copy was lent by Viscount Galway to the Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (No. 129), in which the inscription and date tally with the Louvre example. A miniature of Kratzer, in the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan's collection, is described in Chapter XXV.

Kratzer, born in Munich, was educated at Cologne and Wittem-

[1] It appears to have been at one time in the Arundel Collection, and is entered in the inventory of 1655 as "Ritratto d'un Mathematico." As all the other portraits just mentioned were also in the Earl's possession, it is natural to suppose that they were obtained by him directly from De Loo.

[2] Wornum, p. 222.

[3] According to Walpole, the Kratzer which was at Holland House "till the death of the Countess of Warwick, wife of Mr. Addison," was a second version; perhaps the one now belonging to Viscount Galway. This version, according to the same authority, appears to have been in the possession of Sir Walter Cope before passing into the Holland House collection.

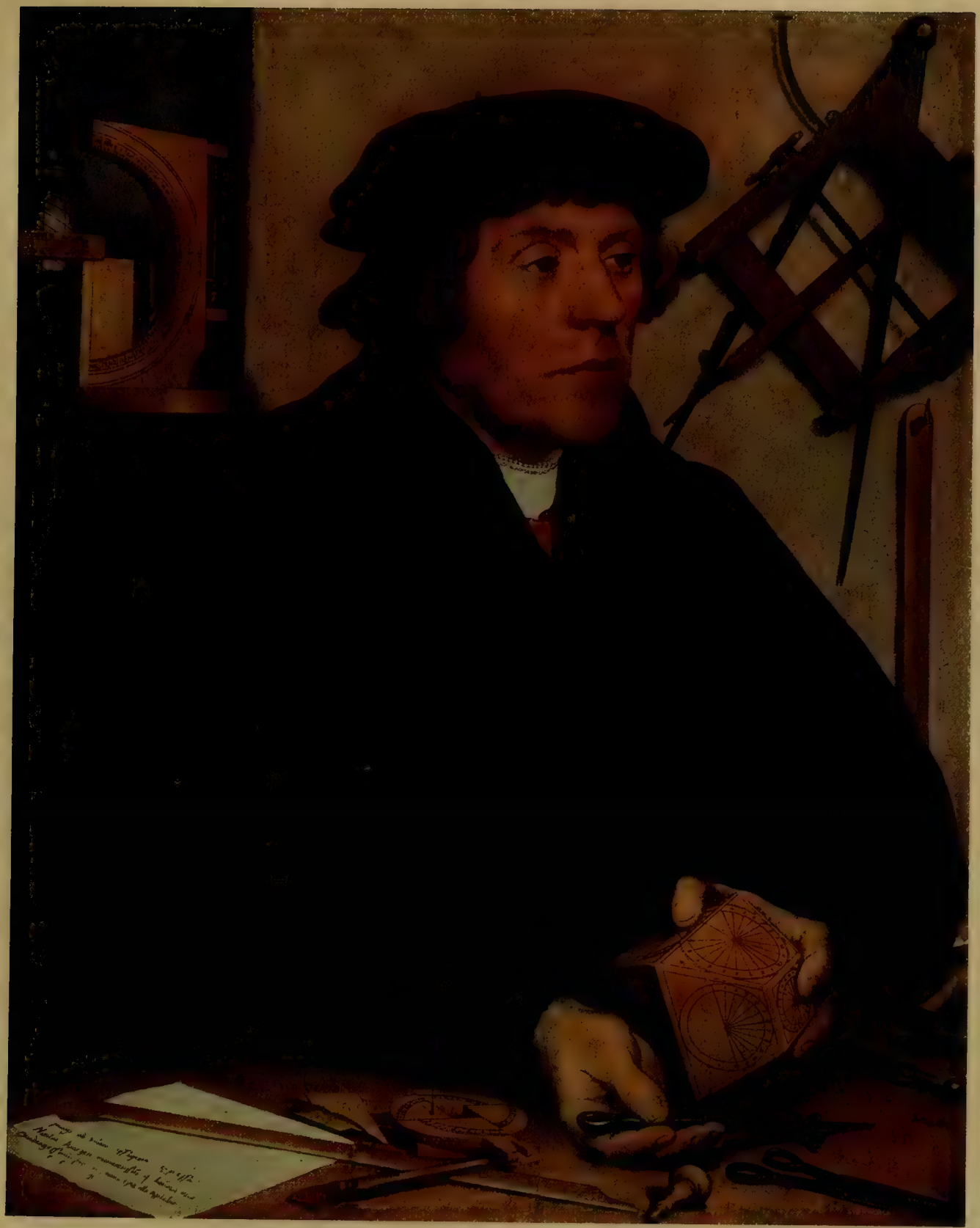
[4] Walpole, *Anecdotes*, &c., ed. Wornum, i. 79.



NIKLAUS KRATZER

1528

Louvre, Paris



berg. He came to England as a young man, and in 1517 was admitted a fellow of Fox's new College of Corpus Christi, Oxford. Later on Wolsey gave him the post of lecturer on astronomy and mathematics at Oxford, and Henry VIII appointed him his astronomer, with a salary of £20 per annum. While at Oxford he designed two sundials, one in Corpus Christi garden, and the other on a pillar in St. Mary's Church, the latter remaining in position until 1744. He died about 1550, and many of his works fell into the hands of the notorious Dr. Lee. Albrecht Dürer, during his visit to the Netherlands in 1520, made a drawing of Kratzer, as well as one of Erasmus. He notes in his diary: "In Antwerp I took the portrait of Master Nicolas, an astronomer, who resides with the King in England; he was very useful to me; he is a German, a native of Munich."

Kratzer and Holbein appear to have become close acquaintances, as was only natural with two men of the same nationality in a foreign country. One of the few contemporary letters in which the painter is mentioned by name is one from Kratzer to Thomas Cromwell, referred to more particularly in a later chapter,[1] in which the astronomer announces that he has sent the Lord Privy Seal by Holbein's hands a book just received from Germany. Like the Steelyard merchants, Kratzer was in the habit of serving the King as a forwarder and translator of letters and papers from abroad, and was sent on occasional journeys to the Continent on royal service. On one of these occasions, in October 1520, Tunstall, who was in the Netherlands for political purposes, wrote to Henry VIII saying that in Antwerp he had met "Nicholas Craczer, an Almayn, deviser of the King's horologes, who said the King had given him leave to be absent for a time." Tunstall asked him to stay till he had ascertained if the King would allow him to remain until the coronation and the assembly of the Electors were over. "Being born in High Almayn, and having acquaintance of many of the princes, he might be able to find out the mind of the Electors touching the affairs of the Empire."[2] Like Holbein and some of the other foreigners in England, Kratzer was not averse from an occasional commercial speculation. Thus, in October 1527, he received licence to import from Bordeaux and other parts

[1] See chap. xxi., vol. ii. p. 152.

[2] *C.L.P.*, iii. pt. i. 1018, 1019. It was during this same visit to Antwerp that Dürer drew Kratzer's portrait.

of France and Brittany 300 tons of Toulouse woad and Gascon wine.[1] His name, spelt in a variety of fashions, frequently appears in the royal accounts, but as a rule only in connection with the payment of his quarter's salary. On April 29, 1531, however, there is an entry: "To Nicholas the Astronomer for mending of a clock, 6*s*." [2] Some of the mathematical and astronomical instruments in the "Ambassadors" picture may possibly have been of Kratzer's making.

Several undated portraits may be ascribed to this period with some certainty; and some others with perhaps less confidence. As a general rule, though it is not without exceptions, Holbein's portraits of his first English period may be distinguished from those of his second by the fashion in which the sitters wear their hair. In 1526–8 the prevailing custom in England was to wear it cropped straight across the forehead, while it was allowed to hang down lower than the ears all round the rest of the head, the face being clean shaven. A very distinct change of fashion took place in the spring of 1535, when Henry VIII began to grow a beard, and ordered his own household to cut their hair. Stow, in his *Annales*,[3] says: "The 8th of May the King commanded all about his court to poll their heads, and to give them example, he caused his own head to bee polled, and from thenceforth his beard to bee notted and no more shaven." This marked change in the dressing of the hair was, of course, not followed by everyone, but it became so general that it is of great assistance in helping to give approximate dates to a number of pictures and drawings. Of the two, the cut of the hair is a better indication of date than the beard or moustache, which were worn more at pleasure. Occasionally long hair is found in conjunction with the beard, and in other cases some men remained faithful to the earlier fashion. Thus Sir Richard Southwell (1536) and the Duke of Norfolk (1540) are examples of long hair and a shaven face after 1535. Some of the German merchants resident in London conformed to the English fashion, but certain of them will be found with beards before 1535, while others again, painted several years later, are clean shaven. It must not be forgotten, however, that Holbein had returned to England nearly three years before the King's edict of 1535, so that certain portraits which have been usually ascribed to his first English period on account of

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. ii. 3540 (28).
[2] *C.L.P.*, v., Privy Purse Expenses.
[3] Ed. Howes, p. 570.

the cut of the sitter's hair, may very possibly have been painted five or six years later.

The portrait of Sir Bryan Tuke, of which several versions exist, the best known being the one in the Munich Gallery (Pl. 87),[1] is ascribed by some writers to Holbein's later English period, though the shaven face and the way in which the hair is worn indicate the earlier date of the first London visit. This test is not, of course, infallible, but it seems probable, nevertheless, that Tuke was painted in 1527 or 1528. The date of his birth is not known, but he received his first public appointment, as king's bailiff at Sandwich, in 1508, and became Clerk to the Signet in the following year. On more than one of the replicas of the portrait his age is given as fifty-seven.

Tuke was a scholar, and one of the More circle, secretary to Cardinal Wolsey, and French secretary to Henry VIII, and as Treasurer of the Household was responsible for the payments to Holbein for his share in the work of the Greenwich Banqueting House, and, later on, of his salary. He was also Clerk of the Parliament and Master of the Posts. He is represented in the Munich version at half-length, three-quarters to the left, with clean-shaven face and long hair, wearing a black cap with ear-pieces, a gown of black silk, lined with brown fur, and a fur collar, over a black doublet also fur-lined and fastened with a gold button, and sleeves of fine chequered black and gold stuff. A gold jewelled cross, on which the pierced hands and feet of Christ are represented in enamel, is suspended round his neck by a gold chain. With the forefinger of his left hand, which holds his gloves, he indicates a paper in front of him, inscribed "NVNQVID NON PAVCITAS DIERVM MEORVM FINIETVR BREVI," and, in smaller letters, "JOB cap. 10." An hour-glass rests on the table behind the paper, in front of his right hand. In the background the figure of Death is seen against a green curtain, holding his scythe in his left hand and with the first finger of the right pointing to the hour-glass. It is signed "IO. HOLPAIN" in the old Augsburg orthography. From overcleaning and other causes the hands and face have lost much of the delicacy of their modelling, and the flesh tints remain unpleasantly red, and the face has a hardness and sharpness which, no doubt, it did not originally possess. Mr. Wornum, who, however, only saw the picture when it was hung too high for proper examination, considered it to be

[1] Woltmann, 219. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 104; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 211.

"painted in the taste and manner of Von Melem." "This picture," he says, "is not a bad one, but the signature is suspicious, as that of our painter; and the style does not proclaim it to be the work of Holbein." [1] Woltmann, on the other hand, says that it "declares itself as strikingly as possible to be the work of Holbein, and it is one of the two genuine paintings among the eight portraits ascribed to him in the Pinakothek," and adds that though so greatly damaged, "yet still from its truth and life-like feeling, as well as from its masterly execution, it is an excellent portrait." The picture, however, is now regarded merely as a good workshop replica of the original painting, and is so described in the latest edition of the Munich catalogue. It appears to have been in the Wittelsbach Collection in 1597, and in the description of it in the inventory of that date, the figure of Death is not mentioned, and was probably added later.[2]

The best version of this picture is the one which at one time was in the possession of the Methuen family at Corsham Court, Wilts, and afterwards belonged to Mr. R. Sanderson, at whose sale at Christie's in 1848 it was purchased for the Marquis of Westminster.[3] It was bequeathed by the Marchioness of Westminster to her daughter, Lady Theodora Guest, and now belongs to the latter's daughter, Miss Guest, of Inwood. It was in the National Portrait Exhibition, 1868 (No. 625), in the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition, 1880 (No. 188), and in the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition, 1909 (No. 43), lent by Miss Guest.[4] This version is almost identical with the one in Munich, but the skeleton and hour-glass are missing, and on the green-brown background is inscribed "BRIANVS TVKE, MILES . AN° ETATIS SVÆ LVII," with his motto, "Droit et Avant," below. It is in all ways a finer work than the Munich example, and undoubtedly by Holbein, and, in all probability, the original upon which all the others were based. At least three other versions exist, all without the skeleton. One of them, on canvas, was in the possession of Mr. William M. Tuke, of Saffron Walden, in 1869, who purchased it in Yorkshire in 1845, it having been formerly in the collection of a Mr. Winstanley. Another is, or was, in the possession of Mr. John Leslie Toke of Godington

[1] Wornum, p. 295.

[2] See Ganz, *Holbein*, note to 211, p. 251; and K. Voll, *Suddeutsche Monatshefte*, 1905, ii. 8, p. 177.

[3] Woltmann, 213. Wornum, p. 294.

[4] Reproduced in the *Burl. Fine Arts Club Exhib. Cat.*, Pl. xiii.; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 79.



SIR BRYAN TUKE

Alte Pinakothek, Munich



Park, Kent, which is said to have been in expression and features more of the type of Sir Thomas More; while a third belonged, in 1870, to Mr. J. R. Haig.[1] One or other of these versions was owned in the seventeenth century by Lord Lisle, son of the Earl of Leicester, as noted by Evelyn in his *Diary* under the date 27th August 1678.

The portrait of the Cornishman, Reskimer,[2] at Hampton Court, has been ascribed by most critics to Holbein's first English period, and so is included in this chapter, although the exceptionally long beard, which reaches almost to his waist, and the hair, which, though not polled, is short enough to show the ears, would indicate a date after 1535. It has suffered somewhat in the course of time, but in its technique it resembles Holbein's work at the beginning of his second English period, and so was probably painted at about that time. There is a fine drawing for it in the Windsor Collection,[3] which is inscribed, "Reskemeer a Cornish Gent.," in which the hair and beard are carefully wrought. This study appears to be among the earlier drawings in the collection.

"The portrait," says Mr. Law, "represents a youngish man, not more than twenty-eight, we should say, seen in a nearly complete profile, turned to the left, the light coming in from the right. He is dressed in a plain, dark-coloured coat or mantle; with the small white collar of his shirt showing, the two strings of which hang down untied. His two hands, which are drawn and painted with all Holbein's strength and precision, are both seen, the knuckles of the left being turned frontwards to the spectator, and the palm of the right upwards, with the fingers just touching the end of his beard. He wears a flat black cap slantwise over the right side of his head. His hair is red, as is also his long peaked beard. The background is a bluish green, with a sprig of vine." Some such branch of vine or fig frequently appears in the backgrounds of Holbein's earlier portraits. It is on wood, or, possibly, according to Mr. Wornum,[4] on paper or parchment attached

[1] See *Notes and Queries*, 4th series, v. p. 313; *Athenæum*, Nos. 2186, 2187 (Sept. 18, 25, 1869); and *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, under "Tuke."

[2] Hampton Court, 610 (325). Woltmann, 162. Reproduced by Ernest Law, *Holbein's Pictures*, &c., Pl. ix.; Davies, p. 184; Cat. Tudor Exhib., 1890, No. 72, p. 32; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 113.

[3] Woltmann, 308; Wornum, i. 17; Sir R. Holmes, i. 48. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 143.

[4] Wornum, p. 216.

to oak, 1 ft. 6½ in. high by 1 ft. 1½ in. wide. The brand of Charles I —" C.R." crowned—is on the back of the panel.

Nothing of its history is known, except that it was in Charles I's collection, and is described in his catalogue, page 8, as follows : " A side-faced gentleman out of Cornwall, in his black cap, painted with a long peaked beard, holding both his hands before him ; some parts of a landskip. Being less than life, upon a defaced cracked board, painted upon the wrong light. Done by Holbein, given to the King by the deceased Sir Rob. Killigrew, Vice-Chamberlain to the Queen's Majesty." Mr. Law suggests, no doubt correctly, that it was said to be " a gentleman out of Cornwall " in the catalogue on the authority of the inscription on the Windsor drawing.

The name is spelt in many ways in the records—Reskemeer, Reskimear, Rekymar, Reshemer, Reskemyr, Reskimer, and so on. The portrait is usually considered to represent John Reskimer, of Marthyn or Murthyn, though there is no authority for this except the fact that a John Reskimer was living at about this time. Among the various references to men of this family in the State Papers, Reskimers of more than one Christian name appear. A Mr. Reskemar is mentioned in 1527 as belonging to Wolsey's household, and in 1532 the name of John Reskymer, son and heir of John Reskymer, occurs in connection with a grant of land in Cornwall.[1]

The John Reskemeer or Reskimer whose portrait this is said to be was the son of William Reskemeer, fourteenth in descent from the first of that name who settled in Cornwall, and Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Arundel of Telverne. By his wife Catherine, daughter of John Trethurff, he had several children, his son William succeeding him ;[2] though, according to a pencil note in the copy in the British Museum of John Chamberlaine's " Imitations of Holbein's Drawings," he married Jane, one of the daughters of Robert, natural son of Henry, Lord Holland, the last Duke of Exeter. He was High Sheriff of Cornwall in 1557, and his seat, Marthyn, was one of the eight parks in that county in 1602.

There is a fine portrait in the Prado, Madrid, representing an elderly Englishman of extremely plain features and with an exceptionally large nose,[3] which Woltmann, who first drew attention to it,

[1] *C.L.P.*, v. 1363. [2] See Law, *Holbein's Pictures*, &c., p. 29.
[3] Woltmann, 217. Reproduced by Knackfuss, fig. 101 ; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 224.

regarded as a genuine work of Holbein's first English period. His clean-shaven face with its many heavy wrinkles is of a very ruddy brown colour. His small black cap has long ear-pieces, and he wears the customary dark cloak or overcoat, with a collar of black embroidered or watered silk, open at the top, and looped together with a cord, showing the white shirt below, cut straight without a collar of any kind. It is a half-length, almost full-face, the head and eyes turned slightly to the left. He holds a rolled-up paper in his left hand. It bears the stamp of truth in every line of the rugged countenance. Modern criticism, however, refuses to accept it as a work from Holbein's brush. Dr. Bode and other German writers consider it to be by the Master of the " Death of Mary."

A small portrait of undoubted genuineness, although badly overpainted, and belonging to the first English period, is the likeness of Sir Henry Wyat in the Louvre (Pl. 88),[1] which for many years was known as a portrait of Sir Thomas More. According to Mr. Lionel Cust,[2] this panel is in all probability the same as the portrait of " Cavaglier Wyat," painted in 1527, by Holbein, which was in the possession of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, and among those pictures which, after his widow's death at Amsterdam in 1654, were disposed of by her son, Viscount Stafford, to M. Jabach of Cologne, from whom they were purchased by Colbert for the collection of Louis XIV, and so came into the Louvre. Several copies of it exist. There is an excellent replica in the National Gallery of Ireland[3] (No. 370), which was acquired at the sale of the Magniac Collection in 1892; while a copy of it belongs to Constance, Countess of Romney, with which goes a picture of Wyat's famous cat, which picture, according to Sir Martin Conway,[4] may likewise represent an original by Holbein. A somewhat later, probably seventeenth-century, picture belonging to Lady Romney, is made up out of a combination of the two—master and cat—with a background of prison wall and window.

In the Louvre picture Sir Henry is represented at half-length, slightly turned to the right, wearing a black skull-cap over his long hair, and the customary overcoat with deep fur collar, and green under-sleeves; from his shoulders hangs a large heavy gold chain, to

[1] Woltmann, 227. Reproduced in *Masterpieces of Holbein* (Gowan's Art Books, No. 13), p. 19; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 78.

[2] *Burlington Magazine*, December 1909, p. 159.

[3] On panel, 14 in. high by 12½ in. wide.

[4] *Burlington Magazine*, December 1909, p. 154.

which a gold cross is attached, which he grasps with his right hand, and holds a folded paper in his left. He is clean-shaven, and has a large rounded nose. The wrinkled face, the small tremulous mouth, and the tired eyes with the sadness of their expression, produce a very life-like effect of old age. The chain is put on with real gold, in a way which Holbein practised from time to time in England. Although it has suffered severely, it seems to be an undoubted example of the first English period. It is about 15½ in. high by 12 in. wide. Woltmann saw a copy of it in London in the Robinson Collection, probably the one now in Dublin, and he speaks both of it and of the one belonging to Lady Romney as of high artistic merit.[1] Sir Henry Wyat, of Allington Castle, Kent, who had served Henry VII, was appointed as a member of the Privy Council by Henry VIII on his accession to the throne. He died in 1537. Holbein probably became acquainted with him when at work on the Greenwich Banqueting House.

In addition to these undated portraits, there are several studies for paintings now lost which it is the custom, both from the style of drawing and the fashion of hair and dress, to attribute to this earlier period. The truly magnificent head of an unknown man at Chatsworth, and the almost equally fine drawing of Sir Thomas Elyot (Pl. 89),[2] author of the " Boke called the Governour," and friend of More, and that of his wife, Lady Elyot,[3] among the Windsor heads, have thus been ascribed to 1527–8 ; but in these three cases the draughtsmanship is so extraordinarily true and delicate, and at the same time so strong and so full of character in every touch, that one is inclined to place them some six or seven years later as work of the first years of Holbein's second English period. The Chatsworth drawing [4] is outlined in black with the point of the brush on flesh-coloured paper, with a spot of red here and there. " It would be useless to dilate upon the qualities of this masterpiece," says Mr. S. Arthur Strong, " in which Holbein seems to touch the highest point attainable by human faculty within the chosen limits. By the side of such work as this, Leonardo da Vinci himself would appear conventional, almost effeminate." [5] This

[1] Woltmann, i. 341.

[2] Woltmann, 284; Wornum, i. 34 ; Sir R. Holmes, i. 38. Reproduced by Davies, p. 216.

[3] Woltmann, 285 ; Wornum, ii. 19 ; Sir R. Holmes, i. 39. Reproduced by Davies p. 216.

[4] Woltmann, 140. Reproduced by S. Arthur Strong in *Drawings by the Old Masters at Chatsworth*, 1902, Pl. liv.; *Burlington Magazine*, vol. i., April 1903, p. 224.

[5] S. Arthur Strong, *Drawings, &c.*, and in *Critical Studies and Fragments*, p. 133.



SIR HENRY WYAT

Louvre, Paris



SIR THOMAS LEYOT

Dressing in Black and Crimson cloaths

WINDSOR CASTLE

SIR THOMAS ELYOT

Drawing in black and coloured chalks

WINDSOR CASTLE


Holt Knight

praise is by no means excessive, as the drawing is wonderful in its truth, its combination of delicacy and strength, and its beauty. There is a second head of an unknown man by Holbein at Chatsworth,[1] of a later date, and in no ways as fine as the earlier one. It is in black chalk with a wash of red, and it has been dashed in with rapid, vigorous strokes, though with little of the subtlety of the first.

With the exception of several doubtful examples, such as the Dr. John Stokesley, Bishop of London,[2] in Windsor Castle, which, though a work of high quality, has characteristic features in the painting which preclude its attribution to Holbein, the above-mentioned pictures constitute the tale of the painter's achievement in England during his first visit, which lasted only some twenty months or so. During that time, however, he not only spent a couple of months or more over the decoration of the Greenwich Banqueting House, and made numerous studies for the big More Family Group, and carried that picture itself some way towards completion, but also painted portraits of Sir Thomas and Lady More, Archbishop Warham, Sir Henry and Lady Guldeford, Thomas and John Godsalve, Niklaus Kratzer, Sir Henry Wyat, and Sir Bryan Tuke, so that his output was a considerable one.

In addition to these, there is the portrait of Reskimer, and possibly others of Margaret Roper, Sir Thomas and Lady Elyot, and Sir Nicholas Carew,[3] while it is almost certain that he also painted one of Bishop Fisher, although the drawing for it is now the only record which remains. This list, which includes fourteen or more portraits, shows that Holbein, in spite of lack of official recognition from the King, received sufficient patronage from the More circle and the Court to keep him very busily and remuneratively occupied.

[1] Woltmann, 141. Reproduced by Strong in *Drawings*, &c., 1902, Pl. lv.; *Burlington Magazine*, vol. i., May 1903, p. 354.

[2] Reproduced by Law, *Holbein's Pictures*, &c., Pl. iv.; Knackfuss, fig. 99.

[3] See Vol. ii. pp. 87–9.

CHAPTER XV

THE RETURN TO BASEL (1528–1532)

Return to Basel and purchase of a house—Iconoclastic outbreaks in that city—Destruction of sacred paintings and sculptures—Lack of work, and death or absence of old patrons—Portrait of his wife and children—His relationships with his wife—Completion of the wall-paintings in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall—"Rehoboam rebuking the Elders"—"Meeting of Samuel and Saul"—Portrait of Erasmus painted in Freiburg—Book illustrations—Repainting the faces of the clock on the Rhine Gate—Holbein's return to England.



NTIL the discovery in 1870, by Dr. Édouard His-Heusler,[1] that Holbein purchased a house in Basel in August 1528, it was generally supposed that the painter remained in England until the spring or summer of 1529. In September of the latter year Erasmus wrote letters to Sir Thomas More and Margaret Roper thanking them very heartily for the drawing of the family picture which Holbein had brought to him. This was the study now in the Basel Gallery. Erasmus was then living in Freiburg, and it was supposed that the painter halted there on his way home on purpose to deliver this sketch and letters which he was bearing from Chelsea. This supposition has now to be abandoned.

There is no doubt that Holbein had received a two years' leave of absence from the Basel Town Council, and that his only reason for leaving England, where he was busily and lucratively occupied, was the fact that he was bound by the laws of his adopted city to return within the stipulated period, or otherwise to run the risk of forfeiting his rights of citizenship, and incurring other punishment, in addition to possible trouble with his own particular guild. By an order of the Council dated 1521, no one subject to the jurisdiction of Basel was allowed to take service with, or receive pension money from, any foreign prince or community; and this law may have been one of the reasons why Holbein did not enter into Henry VIII's service at

[1] *Die Basler Archive über H. H. dem Jüngern*, in Zahn's *Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft*, iii. 123, 1870.

this time, as it would be necessary before doing so to obtain the Council's special permission, as he did later on in his career.

Holbein's purchase of a house in Basel was made on August 29, 1528, exactly two years after the date of Erasmus' letter to Ægidius, given to the painter on the eve of his departure for England. The record of the sale is to be found in the "Fertigungsbuch," and from the entry it appears that both Holbein and his wife were present in person at the completion of the transaction. It was bought from the cloth-weaver Eucharius Rieher, and the price was 300 gulden or florins, which shows that Holbein had brought home money in his purse, though only one-third of the purchase price was paid, and the remainder secured by a mortgage. It was a two-storeyed house, overlooking the Rhine, in the St. Johann Vorstadt, next door to Froben's book-store, and its site is now occupied by No. 22. Within living memory it was still standing, outwardly very little changed since the days in which Holbein and his family lived in it; as also the smaller cottage next door, which the painter purchased some years later, on the 28th March 1531, for 70 gulden, from the fisherman Uly von Rynach, on part of the site of which a factory has since been erected.

Here Holbein settled down to work again, but, if one may judge from the few examples of his brush which can be ascribed to this period, he must have found Basel a far less profitable field for his labours than England. During his absence Switzerland had fallen on evil days. At about the date of his return the religious differences had reached their climax, and in Basel violent outbreaks of hostilities were taking place. At Easter, 1528, the Council had been obliged to give way to the extent of allowing divine worship according to the Reformed ritual in some of the churches, and permitting the removal of all sacred pictures from their walls. The Council, indeed, did their best to prevent sedition. Their recommendation that "no man should call another papist or lutheran, heretic, adherent of the new faith or the old, but each should be left unharassed and unscorned in his own belief," fell on unheeding ears.[1] Such prudent advice was ill-suited to the passions which had been aroused. In the following year all the Catholic members of the Council were forcibly removed by a mob of armed citizens, and this action was followed by a number of excesses.

[1] Woltmann, i. 354.

On Shrove Tuesday, 1529, a furious outburst of iconoclasm occurred. The Cathedral was attacked by a crowd of some hundreds of reformers, who broke open the doors, and pulled down and dashed to pieces all the pictures and altars. The Council issued orders and edicts which were powerless to stay the fanaticism of the rioters, who visited in turn the other churches and monasteries in the city, destroying everything that was not hastily hidden from them. On the following day, Ash Wednesday, the destruction continued. Four hundred men, headed by the public executioner, paid a second visit to the Cathedral, broke up everything that still remained, and of the fragments made five large bonfires. Pictures and wooden images were burnt, wall-paintings were whitewashed over; and however beautiful such works of art might be, their merits were insufficient to save them. The reformers' hearts were hot against what they considered the gross idolatry of their opponents, and nothing was spared from the fire upon which they could lay their furious hands. Here and there a picture or relic was saved, among them at least one work of Holbein's, the early "Last Supper," already described, though it appears to have been badly damaged at the time, and restored later on.[1] No doubt more than one of his pictures perished, together with others by such Basel painters as Urs Graf, Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, and Hans Herbster. His beautiful shutters for the Cathedral organ happily escaped; it may be that they were hung too high to be easily reached, and were thus protected from the first outbreak, and afterwards, when the edict was issued forbidding all sacred pictures in the churches, they would be allowed to remain on the walls under the order which permitted the use of all paintings of a character to which no adoration could be shown.[2] Erasmus, in a letter to Pirkheimer, gives a graphic description of what took place on these two days of fanatical destruction. "There was no one," he says, "who did not fear for himself, when these dregs of the people covered the whole market-place with arms and cannons. Such a mockery was made of the images of the saints, and even of the Crucifixion, that one would have thought that some miracle must have happened. Nothing was left of the sculptures, either in the churches or in the cloisters, in the portals or in the monasteries. Whatever painted pictures remained were daubed over with whitewash, whatever was inflammable was thrown upon the

[1] See pp. 75–6.

[2] Woltmann, i. 355.

pile, whatever was not was broken to pieces. Neither pecuniary nor artistic value could save anything."

This tumultuous state of affairs proved too much for Erasmus, who had a detestation of all forms of violence, and only wished for peaceful surroundings in which to pursue his work. More than one of his noble patrons, from whom he received pensions, objected to his continued residence in a city in which the Protestant party were dominant. He had, too, some fear for his own life; for though he was an adherent of neither side, his opinions were not popular with the reformers. So he now turned his back upon the city which he had made his permanent home since 1521, and in which, old and sickly as he was, he had hoped to end his days, and removed to the neighbouring city of Freiburg, where the Catholic party were in the ascendancy. Thither Bonifacius Amerbach accompanied him, and remained with him for some time.

As Holbein found Erasmus still in Basel when he returned there in August 1528, he must have presented Sir Thomas More's gift to him on his arrival. There could be no reason for delay unless he had in some way mislaid the sketch. Nor is it likely that Erasmus would have waited for thirteen months before writing to More to thank him; if he had done so, he would at least have made some apology for his remissness. Yet in his published works his letter of thanks is dated Freiburg, 5th September 1529, so that the matter is not easy of explanation, unless this again is another mistake in dating on the part of the editor of the letters. If the correct date of the letters to More and his daughter is 1528, not 1529, then Erasmus wasted little time before writing to More to thank him for the drawing. It seems certain that the scholar, highly delighted with the picture of his friends, and the letters from them which accompanied it, would not let many days go past without acknowledging them.

In his letter to Sir Thomas he says: "Oh that it were once more granted me in life to see such dear friends face to face whom I contemplate with the utmost joy imaginable in the picture, which Holbein (Olpeius) has brought me!"[1] On the next day, September 6th, he wrote to Margaret Roper: "I can scarcely express in words, Margaret Roper, thou ornament of thine England, what hearty delight I experienced when the painter Holbein (Olpeinus) presented to my view

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. iii. 5922. *Eras. Ep.*, p. 1230.

your whole family in such a successful delineation, that I could scarcely have seen you better had I been myself near you. Constantly do I desire that once more, before my goal is reached, it may be granted me to see this dear family circle, to whom I owe the best part of my outward prosperity, and of my fame, whatever they may be, and would owe them rather than to any other mortal. A fair portion of this wish has now been fulfilled by the gifted hand of the painter. I recognise all, yet none more than thee, and from the beautiful vestment of thy form I feel as if I could see thy still more beautiful mind beaming forth. . . . Greet thy mother, the honoured Mistress Alice, many times from me; as I could not embrace her myself, I have kissed her picture from my heart." [1] In the first letter Erasmus writes Holbein's name as Olpeius, confusing him for the moment with an old "famulus" of his own, Severinus Olpeius. In the second letter, in which he calls him Olpeinus, he gets nearer to the correct name. In her answer to this last letter, dated November 4th, Margaret says: "Quod pictoris tibi adventus tantæ voluptati fuit, illo nomine, quod utriusque mei parentis nostrumque omnium effigiem depictam detulerit, ingentibus cum gratiis libenter agnoscimus." [2]

Holbein must soon have discovered that his prospects of remunerative employment were far from promising, when compared with the field he had so recently abandoned. Fortunately he had some little money in his pockets when he returned, and perhaps for some months, before the religious dissensions came to so acute a head, he may have found profitable work. But the outburst in the spring of 1529 put an abrupt end to all painting of sacred pictures or work of any kind for the churches. The 18th clause ("upon pictures") in an order passed by the Reformation party in that year stated: "We have no pictures in our churches, either in the city or country, because they formerly gave much incitement to idolatry, therefore God has so decidedly forbidden them, and has cursed all who make images. Hence, in future, by God's help, we will set up no pictures, but will seriously reflect how we can provide comfort for the poor needy ones who are the true and living images of God." [3] For a painter who had to make a living for a wife and family such conditions were serious enough, for they cut off one of his chief sources of employment.

[1] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. iii. 5924. *Eras. Ep.*, p. 1232.
[2] *C.L.P.*, iv. pt. iii. 6048. *Eras. Ep.*, p. 1743.
[3] Woltmann, i. 356.

Judging from the numerous studies in the Basel Gallery, Holbein, before his first visit to England, must have been frequently engaged on pictures, wall-paintings, and designs for windows for churches, all of which, with few exceptions, such as the Meyer Madonna and one or two others, perished before the fury of the mob. It was natural that he should look forward to a continuance of work of this nature, and however strongly, in his heart, he may have believed in the Reformation itself, he must have been in little accord with it in its treatment of art. Nor was it a time when the leading citizens of Basel had leisure or desire for so peaceful an occupation as sitting for their portraits. The times were far too strenuous. Several of his earlier friends, and patrons, too, were no longer there to help him. Froben had died two years before he got back, and Erasmus was about to wipe the dust of Basel from his feet, while Amerbach was a temporary absentee. His old friend, Jakob Meyer "zum Hasen," was still a prominent figure among the Catholic minority, and, therefore, had little influence to place at his service. Under such adverse conditions it is, perhaps, not wonderful that only one panel painting of the second Basel period can be pointed to with any certainty—the portrait group of his wife and two elder children. This, and the remaining wall-paintings in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, are the only works of importance of which we have any record.

The portrait of his wife and his two elder children, Philip and Katherine, in the Basel Gallery (No. 325) (Pl. 90),[1] was, no doubt, one of the first things he undertook after his arrival. In any case, it was painted in 1528 or 1529. It is in oils on four pieces of paper fastened together, and at some subsequent time has been cut out round the figures and mounted on a panel, thus spoiling the delicacy of the outlines. The figures are life-size, and the wife, who is seated, facing the spectator, is shown at almost three-quarters length. She wears a dark green bodice without ornament, cut very low and straight across the breast, and a dark brown over-garment trimmed with a thin band of fur. Her light brown hair is covered by a transparent veil which comes low over her forehead, and a small brown cap on the back of her head. On her left knee she supports a red-haired baby, about eighteen months old, born during Holbein's absence, dressed in

[1] Woltmann, 15. Reproduced by Davies, p. 134; Knackfuss, fig. 107; *Œffentliche Kunstsammlung in Basel*, 57th annual report, new series, iii. p. 1, 1907; Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 83.

a cap and an undyed woollen garment, while her right hand rests on the shoulder of a boy of about six or seven, with long fair hair, wearing a dark blue-green dress above which the white collar of his shirt is visible. The lad, who is shown in profile, is looking upwards to the right, and presses against his mother's knee. His head and shoulders only are shown.

The picture is dated, but in the cutting out process it underwent prior to its fastening upon the wood panel, which was done before 1586, as is to be gathered from the Amerbach inventory, the last figure has been shorn away, and only " 152 " remains. It is almost certain that this date was 1528 or 1529, probably the former, for Holbein, once more united with his wife and family, would be likely to give expression to his pleasure by painting their portraits. In the greater energy of its conception and the vigour of its treatment it more closely resembles the portraits painted in England than his earlier Basel work.

There are other versions of this picture in existence, among them a good late sixteenth-century copy in the Lille Museum,[1] which has a blue background. Like the Basel example, it is on paper pasted upon wood, but it has not been cut out round the outlines, while on a piece of paper added to the top of the panel there is an inscription in gold, which runs—

" Die Liebe zu Gott heist Charitas,
Wer Liebe hatt der tragtt kein hass,"

thus turning it into a representation of Charity. A second[2] example, though a work of no particular skill, is of interest because it gives what was probably the background of the original work before it was cut down, one of those architectural compositions with pilasters and an ornamental frieze which Holbein so frequently used as a setting for his earlier portraits, part of which forms a high-backed seat in which the wife is placed. This copy, which belongs to Herr E. Trümpy, of Glarus, shows some small differences, in the boy's hair, the folds of the draperies, &c., but it has suffered so much that it is

[1] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 213, who mentions other copies at Aix-les-Bains, Constance, in the Albertina, &c. At the time Dr. Woltmann was writing his book it was in Cologne, in the possession of Herr Brasseur, the picture dealer.

[2] Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 212.

HOLBEIN'S WIFE AND CHILDREN

1528–9

BASEL GALLERY



difficult to pass judgment upon it. It must have been painted before the original work was cut down towards the end of the sixteenth century. That the picture represents the painter's wife and children is certain, for it was in the possession of Amerbach, whose son entered it in his inventory as "Holbeins fraw vnd zwei kinder von im H. Holbein conterfehet vf papir mit olfarben, vf holtz gezogen."

This picture is painted with greater breadth and freedom than was his custom. The delicacy of handling which marked almost all that he did has given place to a more rapid but none the less truthful execution. The baby is by no means a beautiful child, and the mother's plainness of countenance is almost repulsive at the first glance. Her expression is one of deep dejection, her face careworn and unhappy, and her eyes are rimmed with red, suggesting ill-health or sorrow. The grouping is unconventional, and it may be that the artist began to paint them just as he happened to see them, without any elaborate posing or attempt to make a picture of them. The wonderful truth with which he has realised them, however, the fine rich colour, and the luminous painting of the flesh tones, combine to make it one of his greatest works, in the study and appreciation of which the want of physical beauty in the principal sitter and the severe plainness of the costumes are overlooked and forgotten. Though only six years later than the Solothurn Madonna and the portrait at the Hague, Elsbeth Holbein has already lost all appearance of youth, and the cares of life have left heavy traces behind them. Her features are now not merely homely, but heavy and uninteresting, while her figure is solid, ample, and ungraceful. Yet it is still possible to recognise the likeness, no doubt somewhat idealised in the earlier work, but here set down with remorseless truth. The cause of this loss of youth and good looks, due, according to some modern critics, to Holbein's neglect and his infatuation for Magdalena Offenburg, has been touched upon in an earlier chapter. M. de Wyzewa, who is one of those who hold this theory, regards this Basel family group as one of the few pictures in which Holbein completely reveals his artistic soul. "I doubt," he says,[1] "if there exists in the world another painting comparable to this for subtle and dolorous beauty of expression." In its revelation of truth it is an act of accusation against the painter

[1] "A propos d'un Livre nouveau sur Holbein le Jeune," in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th January 1912.

himself, such as is not to be found in any written account of him by his contemporaries, who, it is suggested, influenced by his importance as an artist and by his connection with big and influential people, did not think it wise to speak the truth about him. It was Magdalena who was the chief cause of this domestic misery, we are told. She was "l'odieuse rivale qui l'a dépouillée de sa beauté et de son bonheur, et de toute sa fortune par-dessus le marché, qui a réduit l'exquise jeune femme du portrait de la Haye à devenir le fantôme navrant du portrait de Bâle; voilà peut-être le grief qui aura pesé le plus cruellement sur le cœur ulcéré d'Elisabeth Holbein! Et qui sait si ce remords-là ne s'est point dressé au premier plan dans l'âme du peintre lui-même, lorsqu'en 1529 celui-ci a éprouvé le besoin de nous crier sa confession de mari et de père, en même temps qu'il allait nous révéler la puissante, l'émouvante grandeur de son génie d'artiste?"

The boy in the picture, who appears to be six or seven years old, may well have been the model for the Infant Christ in the Solothurn Madonna. The group has been painted with a speed and spontaneity which is not usual in Holbein's portraits, with their minute finish and careful elaboration of details. This unwonted vigour of handling, however, gives to it a freedom and a largeness which make it unique among the varied manifestations of his genius. It has many of the qualities of a brilliant sketch, in which both likeness and character have been set down with direct and masterly power.

A very remarkable portrait study of a young woman in the Basel Gallery (No. 326) (Pl. 91),[1] which comes from the Faesch Cabinet, bears a close resemblance to the Family Group, and is ascribed by Dr. Ganz to the same year, 1528, to which it undoubtedly belongs. The subject, evidently a woman of Holbein's own class, is extremely plain, with heavy features, and dark eyes and hair. She is represented to the waist, turned slightly to the spectator's left, her long hands, with numerous rings, crossed in front of her. It is drawn with the pencil, and coloured with oil-colours thinly laid on and mixed with white upon a red-toned ground. The background is a plain, deep blue. It is unfinished, the turban-like cap, and the outer bodice of the dress having the colour only slightly indicated. It is of the utmost interest, as it affords evidence of Holbein's methods of working at this period,

[1] Woltmann, 46. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, i. 23 (in colour); and in *Holbein*, p. 89. Possibly it represents a sister or near relation of Elsbeth Holbein.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN

(Supposed Lady M. Ellis)

BASIL GOTTLEY

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN

Unfinished study in oils

Basel Gallery



methods which he employed in painting his wife and children, also done in oils on paper; and it is, in addition, a wonderfully powerful study in portraiture, life-like, vigorous, and subtle.

Little is known of Holbein's work in Basel during this period. No other portrait from his brush has been so far discovered; but, happily for him, in the summer of 1530 the Town Council found some employment for him worthy of his great talents, work which occupied him for the remainder of the year. They resolved to finish the internal decoration of their Council Chamber, which Holbein had left incomplete some years earlier, and he was naturally selected as the painter most fitted to do it. For this work he received in all 72 florins, in four separate payments between July 6 and November 18, 1530, a sufficiently modest sum for five months' work, which included at least two large wall-paintings; but, nevertheless, better pay than he had gained for his earlier frescoes in the same room, for the original arrangement was that he should decorate the whole chamber for the sum of 120 gulden, and for that sum he had covered all but the "back-wall" with large pictures.

The new subjects, which may have been selected in 1521, when the work was first begun, were "Rehoboam rebuking the Elders of Israel," and "The Meeting of Samuel and Saul." A third subject, "Hezekiah ordering the Idols to be broken in pieces," was probably only one of the single figures which were placed between the larger compositions. Unlike the earlier wall-paintings, of which the subjects were taken from classical antiquity, the ones upon which Holbein was now occupied were drawn from the Old Testament, and were selected for the purpose of setting forth the evil effects of bad government and the punishment which follows the obstinacy of rulers who oppose their will to the will of God. The "Hezekiah" [1] was chosen, no doubt, as an apt illustration of the wisdom of obeying the commands of God in the sweeping away of all false idols and images, as exemplified in the iconoclastic outbreaks in Basel itself in the previous year, the painting of which Holbein must have undertaken with mixed feelings.

Two fine preliminary designs for the "Rehoboam" and the "Samuel and Saul" form part of the Amerbach Collection, drawings which may have been made as early as 1521. Among the few fragments of the original wall-paintings preserved in the Basel Gallery, there

[1] See Woltmann, i. p. 159.

are two showing the head and the raised hand with pointing little finger of Rehoboam (No. 328) (Pl. 92 (3)),[1] the head being drawn in profile, whereas in the study it is full face, indicating a change in the design when carried out on the wall. In the centre of the composition, as shown in the drawing (Pl. 93),[2] King Rehoboam, seated upon a lofty throne beneath a rich canopy backed by a curtain decorated with a fleur-de-lys device, bends forward, his left hand stretched before him in vehement action, with little finger extended towards the group of Israelitish elders standing below him, some of whom turn away in despair. With his right hand he points to a scourge held by an attendant on the left. The moment depicted is when he cries out in a rage: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins; my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Behind the throne, within the rails enclosing a large vaulted chamber in the Renaissance style, are a number of figures, on the one side the older councillors who had served his father, Solomon, whose advice he neglected, and on the other the younger courtiers whose bad counsel he followed. On the right of the composition is a glimpse of a hilly landscape, with the Crowning of Jeroboam by the revolted tribes in the middle distance. The drawing is washed in Indian ink, with touches of colour in the sky, in the circular openings at the back of the hall, in the landscape, the faces of the figures, and the rails and the floor. The story is told very simply and clearly, but with considerable dramatic force, such as would make an instant appeal to those for whom the lesson it contained was intended. The figures are rather short and stumpy, a fault to be noticed in many of Holbein's earlier designs for books, wall-paintings, and painted glass; but the composition is a dignified one, and the large painting based upon it must have been a noble work. As stated above, the fragments of the original painting which have been preserved show that Holbein deviated from the sketch in essential points. The head of Rehoboam, which is a masterpiece of strong expression, is seen in sharp profile. There are also in the same Gallery two fragments containing groups of heads of the Israelite Messengers (No. 329) (Pl. 92 (1 and 2)).[3]

[1] Woltmann, 21. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 84.

[2] Woltmann, 65. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, ii. 4 (in colour), and in *Holbein*, p. 172; Knackfuss, fig. 115.

[3] Woltmann, 21. Reproduced by Ganz, *Holbein*, p. 85.

"KING REHOBOAM REBUKING THE ELDERS"

Three fragments of the wall-painting formerly in the Basel Town Hall

1530

BASEL GALLERY



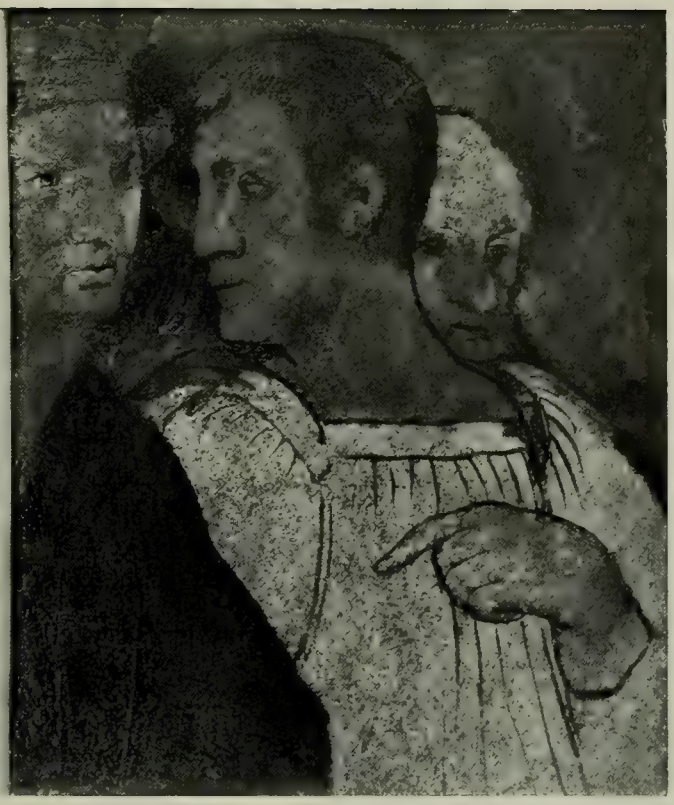


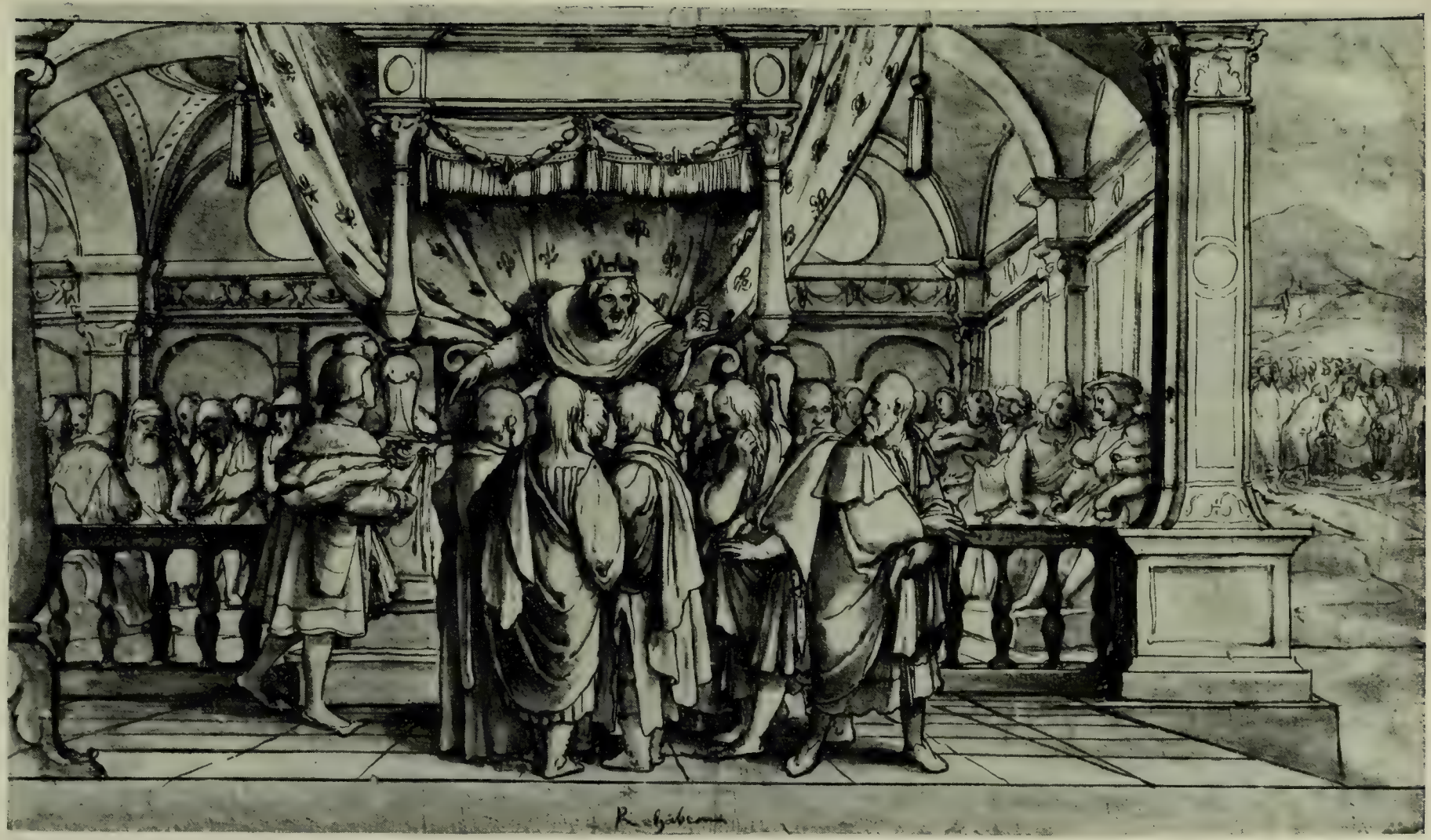


Fig. 1. Plate 63.

REHOBOAM REBUKING THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL

Study for the wall-painting in the Basel Town Hall, 1530

BASEL GALLERY



Traces of gold are still visible on these remains of the original work, showing that Holbein made use of gilding in wall-paintings as well as in portraits.

The wall-painting of "Samuel and Saul" was the largest of all the decorations in the Council Chamber, and that it was painted side by side with the "Rehoboam" on the only wall in the room unbroken by door or window is evident from the fact that in the sketches the same dividing column appears in both. It was probably about 7 or 8 feet high by 16 or 17 feet long, and if the same proportion was preserved in both designs, the "Rehoboam" must have been about 13 feet long. The moment chosen for representation is the return of Saul from his conquest of the Amalekites, and his meeting with the Prophet Samuel. Instead of obeying the command of God, and destroying men, women, children, and flocks, he has spared them, and carried them and much spoil away with him. Samuel has come forth in anger, and Saul, perceiving him, has dismounted, and advances to meet him bent in reverence. The prophet heaps reproaches upon him. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." The right half of the composition is crowded with foot-soldiers and horsemen, wearing Roman helmets, among whom the conquered King Agag is borne captive. In the distance are seen the captured herds and flocks, and the burning villages on the hillsides. The composition is a finely-balanced one, and the noble, menacing figure of the Prophet is well contrasted with the cringing figure of the King, conscious, now that the flush of victory is passing, that he has failed to fulfil the sacred commands. The army behind him is most effectively grouped, and the soldiers' lances, seen darkly against the sky, produce much the same effect of grandeur and of numbers as in Velazquez's great picture. In the left upper corner is a long white tablet—no doubt in the finished painting it was shown hanging from the painted framework surrounding the picture—on which the Latin text, quoted by Tonjola, was inscribed.

The sketch (No. 347) (Pl. 94)[1] has been slightly washed with colour, blue in the sky, the stream in the middle distance, the trees,

[1] Woltmann, 64. Reproduced by Ganz, *Hdz. Schwz. Mstr.*, iii. 23, and in *Hdz. von H. H. dem Jüng.*, Pl. 27 (both in colours), and in *Holbein*, p. 173; Knackfuss, fig. 116.

and the hills, and brown over the landscape, which combines with the blue to produce green in the trees and hillsides, while the flames from the burning villages are bright red. The figures are drawn in brown and shaded with a wash of cool grey. It is not possible from this, however, to gain much idea of the actual colouring of the wall-painting, but, from the darting flames and the volumes of heavy smoke rolling across the sky and blotting out a part of the landscape, it is possible that the general effect attempted was one of strong contrasts of chiaroscuro, such as are to be seen in the Basel Passion picture. Still, the sketch, small as it is, affords ample evidence of the greatness of Holbein's power of design in large compositions crowded with figures, and emphasizes the seriousness of the loss suffered through the destruction of the whole of his wall-paintings and larger decorative works.

Beyond the Town Hall frescoes, little remains to show in what manner he was employed during the remainder of his stay in Basel. There is a fine design for a dagger-sheath, richly decorated with Renaissance ornament, in the Basel Gallery, dated 1529 (Pl. 45 (1), Vol. ii.);[1] but this is the only work of the kind that can be given definitely to this period, though possibly some of the other designs for dagger-sheaths and bands of ornament in the Basel Gallery, described in a later chapter,[2] were made during these years. He also produced a number of designs for woodcuts, among them a series of illustrations for the *Cosmography* and several astronomical works by Sebastian Münster of Munich, published by Heinrich Petri. Münster was in Basel in the autumn of 1529, and it is possible, so Dr. Ganz suggests,[3] that his fellow-townsman, Niklaus Kratzer, whose portrait Holbein had so recently painted, drew his attention to the artist's skill in the delineation of scientific and mathematical instruments, such as Münster required for the illustration of his books. In this way, no doubt, the author and the artist came into personal contact. Holbein drew for him a number of fine designs, such as figures representing the signs of the Zodiac, drawings of sun-dials, and a variety of mathematical and astronomical instruments, and a great astronomical table, first published in 1534, but starting from

[1] Woltmann, 56. See Vol. ii. p. 278.
[2] See Vol. ii. pp. 277–8, 281.
[3] Ganz, *Holbein*, p. xxxiv.

SAMUEL AND SAUL

Study for the wall-painting in the Basel Town Hall

Pen drawing in brown touched with water-colour

BASEL GALLERY



the year 1530, with ornamental accessories and representations of the four seasons, a work of great beauty.[1]

He also painted a new portrait of Erasmus, most probably in Freiburg, for the portrait at Parma, which is one of the best of various almost contemporary copies, is dated 1530. The small circular picture in the Basel Gallery is very possibly the original study painted directly from the sitter. These portraits and the roundel of Melanchthon in the Provinzial Museum at Hanover, which is probably of the same period, have been described in a previous chapter.[2]

There is only one other record to show that he received any further employment from the civic authorities after the completion of the Town Hall paintings. On October 7, 1531, he was paid "17 pfund 10 schilling," or fourteen gulden, for repainting the two clocks on the Rhine Gate ("von beden Uren am Rinthor zemalen").[3] This commission was for renovating the two faces of the old clock, which was decorated with the grotesque figure of the "Lallenkönig," with distorted countenance stretching out his tongue towards Little Basel. This undertaking seems very paltry after the big decorative works upon which he had been occupied twelve months earlier, but was apparently all that the authorities had to give. It is an exaggeration, however, to speak of it, as some writers do, as contemptible work for an artist of his standing. Mrs. Fortescue says of it: "As soon as Holbein got his pay for this disgraceful commission—a pay he was now much too hard pressed to refuse—he quietly slipped away from Basel without taking the Council into his confidence."[4] To Holbein, who by no means regarded himself as a portrait painter only, but to whom all decorative work, however large or however small, was equally an occasion for giving of the best that was in him, the ornamentation of a clock face would in no ways appear to be work in any way disgraceful or beneath him; nor is there the slightest evidence to show that he ran away from Basel like a thief in the night. Throughout his life, indeed, his methods were orderly, and such as became a citizen and guildsman of his adopted town. He must, nevertheless, have suffered many anxieties, for times were unpropitious in Basel, and offered few opportunities for the remunerative practice of the fine arts.

Both in 1529 and 1530 great scarcity prevailed. The religious

[1] Koegler, *Jahrbuch der preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1911.
[2] See pp. 179-80 and 184-5. [3] Woltmann, i. 362. [4] *Holbein*, p. 136.

excitement, too, grew in strength, and the Protestant persecutions became as severe as the papal ones which had preceded them. Holbein himself fell under suspicion. On June 18, 1530, just when he was beginning to work on the Town Hall frescoes, he was called upon, together with a number of other citizens, to justify himself for not having taken part in the Communion instituted in the Basel churches after the abolition of the Catholic ritual in 1529. He gave as an answer that he demanded, before approaching the Lord's Table, that the signification of the holy mystery should be better explained to him. It appears that the information given to him was sufficient to satisfy his conscience, as he did not persist in his refusal. His friend, Bonifacius Amerbach, was more obdurate, and so had the ban passed upon him.

In 1531 open war broke out between the different cantons, through stress of religious differences. This was possibly the last straw in Holbein's case. Work growing daily more difficult to obtain, his thoughts would naturally turn to the happier fields for his genius which England afforded, and he determined to return there. The exact date of his departure is unknown, but it must have been towards the end of 1531 or in the early spring of 1532 ; perhaps the latter date is the more probable of the two, as the journey, in the way in which he would be forced to make it, would be an unpleasant, if not a difficult, one in winter.[1]

[1] See Appendix (J).

POSTSCRIPT TO CHAPTER XIV

A Newly Discovered Portrait of an Unknown English Lady

The discovery of a new portrait by Holbein must always be a matter of the highest interest to students of the master's art, and when the panel so discovered is one in practically faultless condition and of exceptional attraction, its importance as an addition to the list of the painter's works cannot be easily exaggerated. It is pleasant, therefore, to have to record the fact that such a portrait was brought to light for the first time during the present year (1913). The portrait in question formed part of a collection of pictures and engravings removed from Rotherwas House, near Hereford, the seat of the Bodenham family, early in the year, the greater number of which were sold by auction in London last February. The Holbein picture, however, was first heard of at a sale at Messrs. Puttick and Simpson's rooms in Leicester Square on April 8th. It was in a very dirty state, and its beauty was almost entirely obscured by a thick coat of dark varnish, with which it had been covered some two centuries or more ago. It had also two slight abrasions above and below the right eye. Across the left sleeve was painted in white, in late eighteenth-century lettering, the inscription "Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland." This attribution, however, was changed by the compilers of the sale catalogue to "Mary, Queen of Scots," and it was described as by an unknown artist of the early English School. The bidding for this picture started at £10, and it was finally acquired for 340 guineas by Mr. Ayerst H. Buttery.

Upon careful cleaning the false inscription at once came away, and after the removal of the varnish the picture was found to be, as already stated, in a practically faultless condition—except for the two small abrasions—and in the original state in which it was left by the artist, thanks, no doubt, to the varnishing process it had undergone. It is unsigned, and has no inscription giving the name and age of the sitter, but in spite of this it is difficult to doubt its authorship.

Holbein was the only painter then in England who possessed so fine a technique. It has been carefully examined by several leading authorities on the painter, among them Dr. Friedländer, of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, and all are agreed that it is a splendid example of Holbein. A detailed description of it, with several suggestions toward the solution of the identity of the sitter, was first published by Mr. Maurice W. Brockwell, in the *Morning Post* of June 28, 1913.

It is on panel, 31 inches high by 23½ inches wide (Pl. 95). The lady is shown full face, and almost three-quarters length, holding with both hands a very small open prayer-book or breviary, which is attached to a ribbon round her waist by a plain chain. The dress is of deep maroon satin, with the upper part of the bodice of black velvet. The latter is open at the throat, the points of the collar being turned back, showing the white lining. This style of collar occurs very rarely in Holbein's pictures, and is to be seen in only two others of his finished portraits of ladies—those of Catherine Howard and Lady Butts. In these two, however, the "revers" are quite plain, whereas in Mr. Buttery's picture they are richly embroidered in black with a floral design, suggesting carnations, conventionally treated, while round the edge runs a narrow border with a row of conventionalised flowers of a somewhat similar pattern, which occurs again on the white ruffs at her wrists. Her long and thin arms are encased in tightly fitting sleeves, terminating in the then fashionable "hanging" or "over" sleeves, partly of black velvet, which are exceptionally full and heavy, with slashings filled in with white silk embroidered in black with a design suggesting acorns arranged in groups of four. The skirt, or petticoat, of which little can be seen, shows an elaborate floral pattern. The lady wears no rings, but has a plain gold chain wound twice round her neck. The collar of the bodice is fastened together by a small brooch or pin set with a dark "table" stone, from which is suspended a circular medallion or pendant of gold and enamel, with the figure of a lady in a red dress, seated in a high-backed chair, and playing a lute or viol. Above this figure is a scroll with the legend, "Praise the Lord for evermore." The whole is enclosed within a border of scroll work, with a grotesque head in white enamel on either side, green leaves at the bottom and a red rose at the top. The head-dress is of the curved shape introduced from Paris, and not the more customary angular English hood. It has two bands of



PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN ENGLISH LADY

(Formerly in the possession of the Bodenham family, Rotherwas Hall, Hereford)

Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. Ayerst H. Buttery



elaborately wrought goldsmith's work, and is filled in with cerise-red satin, which makes a very beautiful colour contrast with the plain blue-green background, against which the head is so effectively placed. The arrangement of the fair hair, such of it as can be seen, is both unusual and attractive, being parted in the centre, while on either side bands, of slightly lighter colour than the rest, are brought forward over the ears, which are completely hidden. Individual golden hairs are indicated against the dark background, and both hair and head-dress have been rendered with all Holbein's minute and loving care and dexterity of draughtsmanship.

The face is a most expressive one. Both the mouth and the grey, contemplative eyes are full of character, suggested in the most subtle manner and with unerring brushwork. The modelling of the flesh is of extraordinary delicacy. The lady, whoever she may be, though not perhaps strictly beautiful has considerable pretensions to good looks, and her whole personality, indeed, is one of great charm. The colour-scheme, too, is one of exceptional attraction. The contrast between the sombre-coloured garments with glinting lights upon them, and the pale and pearl-like face, standing out against the blue-green of the background, is most harmonious, and the band of red in the head-dress adds to and sets off the delicate blondness of her features. Another point to be noted is the skill with which the slight ripples in the plainly-cut bodice and upper sleeves have been indicated, as well as the little inequalities and furrows in the satin of the head-dress, where the material has slightly puckered at the edge by which it is fastened to the ornamental bands. The portrait, indeed, is one of the most beautiful and attractive ever produced by the painter.

Little or nothing is known of the history of this picture, and at present the identity of the sitter has not been established. The ancient family of Bodenham was settled at Rotherwas long before Henry VIII came to the throne. It was the recent death of Mr. Charles Bodenham, the last direct descendant of this family, which brought about the sale of the estate together with the family mansion and the whole of its contents. "The entire property," says Mr. Brockwell, "seems to have been first purchased by a firm at a south coast watering-place, who being in no special way attracted by the æsthetic and financial value of the contents of the house, without

much ado proceeded to pass them on to a well-known trading firm in Hereford. Fifty-three pictures and thirty-five engravings were disposed of at the end of February last by auction in London. Before that time, it is understood, a picture"—the picture now in question—" had been, for sentimental reasons, offered for £15 to distant connections of the Bodenham family, an offer that was not accepted, and it was ultimately put up for sale at Messrs. Puttick and Simpson's." The Tudor panelling of the house was sold for a great sum of money to an American collector.

Thomas Bodenham was one of the leading gentlemen of Herefordshire during Henry VIII's reign. His name occurs frequently on lists of sheriffs, magistrates, gaol deliveries, and the like, in his own county, but otherwise there is no mention of him in the *Calendars of Letters and Papers*, and he does not appear to have been attached to the Court. It is not, therefore, very probable that the portrait represents his wife or daughter, though this would provide the most natural solution of the sitter's identity. Most critics who have seen the picture are decidedly of the opinion that it was produced during Holbein's first visit to England, in 1526-8, an opinion based largely on the painting of the hands, undoubtedly the least satisfactory part of the panel. They are hard and stiff in the modelling, and have none of the expressiveness which is so marked a characteristic of Holbein's painting of hands during the last ten or twelve years of his life. In some other respects the picture shows qualities which would seem to place it some years later in the painter's career, towards the beginning of his second and longer residence in this country. One feature which may possibly indicate a later date than 1527 is the dress, and more particularly the French hood. It is true that instances are known of the wearing of this head-dress in England as early as 1527, but at that time its use seems to have been confined to a few ladies of the highest aristocracy about the Court. The angular hood with its long black fall was then the almost universal headgear, and remained so for some years longer. The fashion of the latter, and the method of wearing it, can be well seen in Holbein's costume-study of a lady in the British Museum. (No. 11 in Mr. Binyon's Catalogue. Not in Woltmann. Reproduced by Ganz in *Die Handzeichnungen von Hans Holbeins des Jüngeren*, x. 4.) This drawing consists of two whole-length studies on one sheet. In one of them the lady stands

turned three-quarters to the left, her hands in front of her, holding a rosary; in the other she is seen more from the back, the left hand raised and pointing. It is in Indian ink and brush outline, partly washed with Indian ink, and the flesh-tints in red. It is signed twice, "H. H." and "H. H. B," but these signatures are false. An excellent idea of the costume of the period and of the method by which the fall was attached to the hood can be gained from this effective drawing, which was formerly in the Malcolm and Lawrence collections.

The lady of the picture appears to be about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, and it is, of course, quite impossible that she can be Margaret Tudor, whose features are well known, and who was nearly forty in 1527, while Mary, Queen of Scots, born in 1542, is still more impossible. The "French Queen," Mary Tudor, the King's second sister, was born in 1498, and so was twenty-nine in 1527; but here again several authentic portraits of her exist, and these bear little or no resemblance to Mr. Buttery's lady. It must be remembered, too, that all evidence points to the fact that Holbein had no connection with the Court during his first visit to England. It is very probable that the luting figure on the medallion is intended to represent St. Cecilia, and that the sitter, as Mr. Brockwell points out, was named after her. This suggested to him that it might be a portrait of Sir Thomas More's second daughter, Cecilia Heron, who was twenty years of age in 1527 when the More Family Group was painted; but this theory had to be abandoned, for there is little or no likeness between the lady of the picture and the head of Cecilia in the Windsor collection. It is probable that medallions with a figure of St. Cecilia were by no means uncommon at that time. Two of them are mentioned in lists of jewels belonging to the Crown at the period in question. These lists will be found in the *Calendars of Letters and Papers*. Among the entries in the first list, dated 1528 (*C. L. P.*, vol. iv. pt. ii. 5114) are the following:—"A brooch with a gentlewoman luting, with a scripture above it," and "a gentlewoman, holding a leyer in her hand, silver-gilt (delivered to Mr. Wyat)." In the second list, dated 1530 (*C. L. P.*, vol. iv. pt. iii. 6789), which appears to be a copy of the first, the same entries occur with slight differences:—"A brooch with a gentlewoman luting, and a scripture about it," and "*Images*. A gentlewoman, holding a layer in her hands, silver-gilt (Mr. Wyat)."

There are not, however, sufficient grounds for suggesting that the lady in question is wearing one of these particular royal jewels, and that, therefore, she was closely connected with the King, or even a member of Sir Thomas Wyat's family, though the richness and elaborateness of the dress and the exceptionally fine embroidery seem to indicate a personage of high quality. It is to be hoped that further researches will solve the mystery of this fair unknown. In the meanwhile, the portrait provides a very notable and welcome addition to the tale of the master's work, and one not easily surpassed by any other among his portraits of ladies. Thanks to the great kindness of Mr. Buttery the picture is reproduced here.

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